

AMERICA

A CATHOLIC REVIEW OF THE WEEK

FEBRUARY 8, 1941

WHO'S WHO

H. C. MCGINNIS says that his Pennsylvania home has become a depository of files and clippings about Jehovah's witnesses. He has had the hobby for years. In writing this series of four articles, he was more interested in painting a psychological picture than in planting down facts and statistics, of which he has many. Our proofreaders were worried over the use of a small "w" for the Witnesses. Here is the reason, as quoted from Mr. McGinnis: "You ask why Jehovah's witnesses is always spelled with a small 'w'. This is official and comes about through Rutherford's legal training. He claims the witnesses are over 5,000 years old, and makes these claims through the mail. He can successfully defend his statement that Abraham, for instance, was a witness for Jehovah, but he could not claim Abraham belonged to Jehovah's Witnesses. Hence the legality of the small 'w'." . . . MAURICE FELDMAN is a journalist and economist from Vienna. After the German annexation of Austria, he fled to Sweden where he was engaged in editorial work on the financial and economic section of the largest Swedish daily, the *Stockholm Tidningen*. Since his arrival in the United States a year ago, he has written extensively for American periodicals. His article, this week, forms part of the series on the countries occupied, or affected by, the Nazis and the Soviets. . . . THOMAS J. FITZMORRIS, our weekly movie evaluator, was asked to step up to the front pages and pick out the best of the Hollywood crop of last year. . . . THREE ASSOCIATES, Paul L. Blakely, John LaFarge, and Harold C. Gardiner, contribute thoughtful articles on topics that have value for their readers.

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COMMENT

TESTIMONY given by the members of the Cabinet before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee was remarkable for its unanimity. All the Secretaries who have appeared, thus far, told the same story and advocated the same conclusions. They wanted, desperately much, the passage of the Lend-Lease bill, with no amendments. They required that plenary powers, legislative as well as executive, in the matter of "defense," be granted to the President, and thence, to themselves. They warned that Great Britain must go down in defeat unless the United States saves her, through saving itself by her victory. It would not be quite correct to call the testifying Secretaries hysterical; but many of the judgments expressed were so full of forebodings and disaster that one might conclude, the Secretaries were persecuted by daymares and nightmares. Secretary of War Stimson seemed to believe that our entry into war depended only on two factors: the collapse of Great Britain and the near-collapse of Great Britain; only a British victory can save us from war. Just now the United States needs time before it can beat Hitler; meanwhile, "we are really seeking her [British] aid in our defense." Secretary Morgenthau can see little hope for England, and England's defense of the United States, unless this country gets inextricably involved. Neither of the Secretaries is interested in "hard cash." They merely want to save the United States from an enemy who is likely to defeat Great Britain. Secretary Hull spoke behind closed doors. But he is apparently watching for the moment when the United States can come to war-grips with Japan, despite the fact that Japan is sending a peace mission to this country. It would seem appropriate for the Cabinet to hold its sessions in an air-raid shelter, to give a bit of local color befitting the tenor of the discourses.

AMENDMENTS are being rapidly and expeditiously rejected in regard to the Lend-Lease bill. The authors of the bill demanded 200 per cent power be granted to the President and the Administration for the defense of the United States throughout the entire world, English-speaking and otherwise. They may have been prepared to compromise on 100 per cent power, but now they find they can still get 189 per cent without much trouble. Four amendments, as estimated at present, will be adopted. These, of course, will not limit Presidential authority or responsibility, and will not at all obstruct the Secretaries of the Cabinet. They are more a gesture by Congress to itself. They would limit the life of the law to two years; they would advise the President to consult with army and navy authorities; they would ask a report from the President every ninety days, provided, of

course, such a report would not be "incompatible with the public interests"; and they would like to have some specification or other that the bill does not authorize the use of American ships as convoys in belligerent areas. Otherwise, the *any, any* bill will probably pass as written, and the American Ship of State will slide down to within a few inches of the troubled waters of war.

SOME of our readers, stirred by the excellence and fire of an article published in these pages in mid-December (*The Laity Begs Spiritual Aid*, by Imelda C. Rausch), have since been favoring us with their reactions—some of which, we note with gusto, are hot with dissent. And so we are reminded to repeat our annual thumbnail sermonette on the Mass. The greatness of the Mass consists in this: it is a Sacrifice. Some of our correspondents seem to speak of the Mass as if its greatest value is that it brings Christ to our altars for our adoration and prayer. Others talk reverently of the priest's power to change bread and wine into Christ's Body and Blood; they stress, as the chief value of the Mass, the miracle of Transsubstantiation. A few correspondents hold that Communion is the climax, and that the Mass is given to us in order that we may partake of the Eucharist. The irate person whose letter we published last week insists that the Mass is meditation on the Passion of Christ. And so we repeat: the Mass is a Sacrifice; that is its chief value. In it we offer Christ the Victim to God. Our correspondents are stressing minor things. True, we could not celebrate a Mass without Transsubstantiation, and this brings the Real Presence of Christ to our altars, and Communion is a privilege of incalculable value. But any discussion of the Mass which emphasizes these marvels, yet fails to note that the Mass is a Sacrifice, misses the main point. One broadcast of the Christmas midnight Mass (it originated west of the Ohio River) astonished us because, while it spoke movingly of the Real Presence, the Communion, and all the ceremonies, it did not even mention the word *sacrifice*.

HOW greatly will Greece suffer a loss from the recent death of Premier John Metaxas? The near future will provide the answer to that question. It will correspondingly throw light upon the relation between the actual person of a dictator and his ideas. Experience so far in our modern epoch has shown that ideas, for good or for evil, are apt to survive the man. Lenin's voice is still heard beyond his tomb. Kemal Atatürk's death left Turkey able to carry on in the novel and constructive lines that he laid down for it. It is a fair inference that the same principle will prove true in the case of

Greece. In fact, when political or social ideas become incarnate in a man who has long wielded power, it is not easy to tell whether the man carries the ideas or the ideas the man. Sensational conjectures, therefore, as to what would occur at the sudden demise of Hitler or Mussolini appear to have little value. Whatever changes such an event might produce, the system, in one form or another, would probably carry on. The ideas themselves, entertained by pernicious dictators, rather than the individual person who puts them in practice, are our chief menace.

TOO much attention cannot be given to the extremely tortuous reasoning of the determined and highly organized propagandists for artificial birth control. The practice of "planned parenthood" is now being advocated by the Birth Control Federation of America as imperatively necessary for the maintenance of national population strength. "France lost its war not in 1940," declared Dr. Alan Valentine, president of the University of Rochester, "but in preceding decades, when the foundations of its national strength were allowed to decay." Birth control, we are informed, will build up these foundations. To the objection that birth control has a tendency to reduce the population, birth-controllers reply by pointing to the instance of Japan, which suffers from over-population yet has traditionally practised birth control. When we come to the Japanese end of the picture, all reason appears to flee. As recently as January 1, the newspaper *Nichi Nichi* was quoted as saying that Japan was forced to adopt expansionist policies for her increasing population. This is an old and familiar tune. Yet the Japanese Cabinet has just approved a plan to increase the nation's population from today's 67,000,000 to 100,000,000 by 1960. In order to expand, the Planning Board explains, population must increase rapidly and perpetually. But the Japanese birth rate is steadily falling. Hence the Plan. In the meanwhile, in the United States we are steadily becoming a nation of oldsters. Let us hope that dementia is not preceding old age.

LATE, late in autumn the crickets faintly chirp. They remind you that there was a summer; there was a time when you were deafened by the nocturnal chorus. So, too, late, late in the season a last chirp is heard concerning Prof. Bertrand Russell. Far down on page eighteen of the *New York Times*, January 18, is a minute AP dispatch from Albany, informing us that the New York State Court of Appeals refused on January 16 to give permission to him to appeal from the decision of Justice John E. McGeehan, of the State Supreme Court. Last March the Justice revoked Russell's appointment on the grounds that he "has taught in his books immoral and salacious doctrines" whose practice would violate the penal laws of New York State. The Appellate Division upheld the ruling. A final salute to Justice McGeehan and to

Mrs. Jean Kay, Brooklyn mother of two children, whose taxpayer's suit brought Russell to book. A sigh for the folly of those who deceived themselves and others in Bertrand Russell. His springtide of most exuberant defiance is now exchanged for a winter of general oblivion.

THE intrinsic worth of ideas is not always what wins them adherents. Often it is a deliberate program of propaganda that sells the idea to the gullible. The propagandists are zealous, no doubt about it, but not always enlightened. Some One once had a remark to pass on the children of the world being wiser than the children of light. And so is the anonymous donor wise, who has purchased from the English publisher 5,000 copies of Laski's *Where Do We Go From Here?* for distribution in the British Army. The review of this book in *AMERICA* (January 25) reveals its fallacious anti-democratic argument, but the zeal of this one propagandist will result in spreading Sovietized social philosophy among the very men who, we are told, are fighting for democracy. It would be extremely interesting to check up on the reading that is being distributed to our trainees. When *Life* can publish the picture of a strip-teaser in an article that tells of means being taken to build up the morale of the soldiers, it is not unlikely that a lot of intellectual debauchery is being carried on in the name of education. Does any Catholic care to purchase 5,000 books for distribution among our armed forces—books that are sound and not ones that are "sound and fury, signifying nothing?"

DEPENDENCE is an essential quality of human nature. Beneath all our prattle about freedom and the untrammelled human spirit, we all have a craving for a certain amount of restrictions and regulations. We want to be guided, for then we feel safer. This fundamental truth is illuminated by an article in *Harpers* for February, wherein Doris Drucker gives the results of a poll taken among students on the place of authority in their lives. It appears that there is not much. For example, ninety-three per cent report that their parents have never requested them not to see a certain movie, eighty-eight per cent that they have never been told not to read certain books. It is found that the school and church (though the author admits that the Catholic Church has not, like the others, "renounced its authority") exercise even less. This is all interesting enough, but the really surprising fact the poll unearthed is that ninety-three per cent of the students wanted more authority in the home, fifty per cent more in the school, and sixty-five per cent more in the church (this percentage "largely due to the weight of Catholic opinion"). All this adds up, among other things, to the conclusion that most Youth Congresses and kindred groups directed by youth for youth are a lot of nonsense. What youth needs, and really wants, is not leadership, but sane, purposeful, intelligent guidance.

FOLLOWING statistics are cited by the N.C.W.C. News Service from the *Annuario Pontificio*, Papal yearbook. There are 1,730 separate ecclesiastical jurisdictions throughout the world (dioceses, vicariates, etc.). There were 55 Cardinals at the beginning of 1941. Missionaries depending on the Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith total 73,887 (20,578 priests; 8,514 Brothers, 44,895 Sisters). There are 935 Religious Orders, of which 159 are of men, 776 of women. The Holy See has representatives in 60 countries, and 35 have representatives at the Holy See.

ON January 15, there were 163 Catholic chaplains on duty with the armed forces of the United States, and their number is increasing. The Most Rev. John F. O'Hara, C.S.C., Military Delegate, urges that Catholic recruits make themselves known at once to the Catholic chaplains, and that parents write to him. A practical booklet gives sound advice, such as: "Don't gamble, most gamblers become 'moochers,' and the moocher is an army pest." The National Council of Catholic Women has likewise issued a call to local Catholic organizations and individuals to contact the Catholic chaplain and extend him all the help they can. Local organizations can also greatly help families working on the defense program.

WORSE than moochers are the smoochers. The *Voice*, organ of St. Sylvester Parish in Chicago, has issued a vigorous protest against a full-page advertisement of the Haldeman-Julius publications appearing in a recent issue of the *Chicago Daily Tribune*. "What about these 'columns,'" asks the *Voice*, "which are working to destroy the moral fiber of the backbone of our nation, our youth?"

SOME are surprised by the recent news that the Bishops of Holland have issued strict orders forbidding Christian burial to any member of the Nazi party in their territory. The Bishops' position is that Nazism is engaged in an irreconcilable conflict with Christianity. The Bishops' present attitude, however, is but a continuation of the disapproval that they have shown toward Nazism from its first appearance in Holland. Strong warnings were issued against it from the start. A flat denial has been broadcast from the Vatican radio station of the report that the Nazis were making special provision for the practice of the Catholic religion in the occupied countries.

RETURNING from overseas, the Most Rev. C. L. Nelligan, head of the Canadian Catholic Chaplain service and Bishop of Pembroke, expressed the belief that a religious revival is taking place among the British people as a result of the war. He was impressed by Hilaire Belloc's spirit of faith. Belloc spends much time each day in his private chapel. Talking with General de Gaulle, leader of the Free French forces, Bishop Nelligan was assured, among other things, that the General and most of his officers are practical Catholics and that zealous chaplains care for the spiritual welfare of his men.

SAN ANTONIO'S new Archbishop, the Most Rev. Robert E. Lucey, former Bishop of Amarillo, has long been keenly interested in problems of peace, education, and social reconstruction. "The Church," he wrote, "cannot be popular always and everywhere so long as she condemns unjust aggression by arms, opposes divorce and artificial birth control, demands social justice for the masses and preaches mortification to a lustful world."

PREOCCUPATION for the distress of peoples abroad should not work detriment to American interests in the field of social aid, according to the Most Rev. Charles H. LeBlond, Bishop of St. Joseph. "Our first front is at home, our first duty is to our neighbor, our first obligation to our community," he observed to the Welfare Federation of Cleveland.

STRIKES in the defense industries present many a problem in Catholic morals. The *Crown Heights Comment*, published by the Crown Heights Catholic Labor School in Brooklyn, claims labor is co-operating sincerely with the defense program and shows a diminution in strikes in 1939 over 1940. Catholics, whether they are Congressmen or otherwise, who deny the right to strike and advocate repression, find themselves out of harmony with the Church's teachings, which defends these rights while urging use of every means of conciliation. Monsignor Haas, Dean of the School of Social Science at the Catholic University of America, was recently designated by the United States Conciliation service as a special representative to seek settlement of the strike at the Allis Chalmers Manufacturing Company at Milwaukee.

GOOD things are sometimes recognized by those who attack them. The *New Republic*, voicing the sentiments of that type of Leftist who sees the be-all and end-all in material prosperity, recently published a demand that few and fewer persons should live on the farms and more and more reliance should be placed on the machines. Sharply counteracting that view is the project of Emerson Hynes, instructor in sociology at St. John's College, Collegeville, Minn. Mr. Hynes has opened an Information Center for Catholic Rural Youth, planning and distributing material for study courses on rural values, and the "true meaning of rural life." He suggests that country pastors gather around them a group of five to fifteen "alert" young people, and get them to follow through the series of his outlines of study, questions and answers on rural-life values.

LAITY who wished to recite, in English, the Divine Office, were hindered at the beginning by absence of a guide to the day-by-day changes in the Church calendar. This need is now met by an Ordinal, in English, which is issued by the League of the Divine Office at Collegeville, Minn. It is a parallel, in more intelligible form, to that mystifying booklet entitled *Ordo* used by the clergy for the Latin Breviary.

RUSSELL, THEN RUTHERFORD, SPAWN JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES

H. C. McGINNIS

FROM the Atlantic to the Pacific, from Canada to Mexico, Jehovah's witnesses have driven the citizens of forty-one States to the desperation point which, in some instances, revived the almost forgotten American rite of tar and feathers. At one specific time, nearly 1,300 witnesses were either the party of the first part or the party of the second part in 200 law courts. Their opponents were not exclusively Catholics, as they would like to have the public believe; they were Catholics, Protestants, American Legionnaires, Veterans of Foreign Wars, and almost every other kind of decent thinking American.

Therein lies the uniqueness of the witnesses: the average nuisance movement directs its activities against one group or ideal; the witnesses manage to insult everybody as they go along. Directed by that emperor of mountebanks, "Judge" J. F. Rutherford, nearly 42,000 field workers knock at American doors every day, while a thousand sound-trucks blast through the streets urging the death of all religions, the abolishment of all governments, and the abandonment of all organized business and commerce. To say they are subversive and a most pernicious menace to the American way of life is a magnificent understatement.

A shocking parallel exists between their preachments and Communism, as we shall later see, and their activities are so destructive that Canada has made their operations a prison offense. Although the witnesses hotly deny their lack of patriotism, they stand convicted by hundreds of their own statements, some of which will be quoted later in their entirety with complete context, so no possible distortion of meaning may be charged.

The witnesses attack viciously all Christian religions and most especially the Catholic Church which they openly charge with being the American Fifth Column. Their supporting statements to this charge are so utterly ridiculous they should not be dignified by rebuttal. But when one considers that over 300,000,000 pieces of their literature have been distributed, printed in eighty-eight languages, reaching the remotest parts of the globe, and that their two magazines attained a circulation of 6,740,000 copies for the year ending September, 1939, one realizes immediate attention must be given this insidious and destructive movement which advocates the destruction and overthrow of every institution for good which humanity has patiently built up over thousands of years.

The spearhead of this movement and the present sole author of its pronouncements is "Judge" J. F. Rutherford, who very subtly masks his program of destruction by so-called spiritual doctrines, so obviously false that even a high-school debater can shoot them full of holes in a half hour. However, to get a true perspective of this menace and its aims, together with an understanding of its methods, it is necessary to go back a little, for, after all, to get at the "Judge's" motives, it is necessary to see just what it is that makes him tick the way he does.

The International Bible Students Association, the forerunner of Jehovah's witnesses, was started by "Pastor" Charles T. Russell about 1876. Young Russell, so the story reliably goes, was engaged as clerk in a clothing establishment when he received the "call" which, strange to say, came through a poolroom experience. Dropping in one day, he overheard an atheist proclaiming the non-existence of Heaven and hell. Argumentative Russell regretted deeply that his lack of Biblical knowledge prevented his entering the discussion. He decided immediately to remedy the situation. Securing a Bible, he became deeply engrossed in scriptural prophecies, but he felt they should be improved upon and brought up to date.

Armed with this quickly acquired, homespun theology, he formed a cult for the dissemination of his unparalleled interpretations of God's intentions. He entered his new vocation with vigor, for acting the prophet had clerking in a clothing store beaten a thousand ways. An outstanding prophetic utterance was made in 1910 when he announced with positiveness the coming of Christ in 1914. When the World War came instead, Russell's followers claimed that was exactly what their "Pastor" had predicted and that the public had ignorantly misunderstood the pronouncement's mystic symbolism.

Russell was bitterly anti-Catholic, his books reeking with charges that the Church was the anti-Christ mentioned in Revelations. Trying to make this charge stick, he produced another notable achievement, for the Papacy could not be proved the prophecy's "beast" or anti-Christ unless the number "666"—the beast's number—could be proved in some way to refer to the Pope. Lacking a theological training which would enable him to interpret the Bible's symbolisms, Russell decided upon a mumbo-jumbo formula of his own; for his

superstitious and bigoted followers demanded that the Pope be proved anti-Christ with mathematical certainty, for he had "proved" about everything else. Faced with this perplexing dilemma, this "Pastor" showed unequalled mathematical agility in his computations which were about as reasonable as this: take the current year and subtract the year of the Pope's birth, add the number of the United States Marines in service and subtract the answer to "how far is up?" By a hocus-pocus common to all his prophecies, Russell discovered the result to be "666" which, with unusual astuteness, he pinned onto the Pope, delighting his followers no end. Since he was read by millions, he churned to a violent pitch the religious intolerance and bigotry of the near illiterate classes and directed this hatred toward the Catholic Church solely, a practice delightfully profitable.

Naturally, Russell's widespread calumnious preachments forced him to maintain a considerable legal staff, and here is where "Judge" Rutherford enters. Rutherford, born of farmer parents in Versailles, Mo., had set up a law practice in Boonville, Mo. In 1909, then forty years old, he became converted by Pastor Russell, an action no doubt considerably accelerated by a lucrative position on Russell's legal staff. Rutherford had already acquired his title of "Judge" which, it is said, was adopted after his filling in for a four-day absence of the regular judge in the Cooper County Circuit Court—a practice not unusual in sparsely settled regions where spare judges are not grown on trees. His almost negligible acquaintance with judicial duties evidently made a profound impression upon his egotism.

Rutherford entered into his new duties enthusiastically, for he knows a good thing when he sees it. His adoration for his leader caused him to publicly proclaim Russell: "The greatest man that has ever lived since the Apostle Paul." Although the "Judge" insists upon his infallibility, he evidently skidded there, his feelings not being shared by the court which gave Mrs. Russell her divorce from the "Pastor." The divorce decision states that Russell's "insistent egotism, extravagant self praise, and continual domination are such as to render the life of any sensitive Christian woman a burden and to make her life intolerable." The judge could have mentioned also the "Pastor's" rather smelly reputation for immorality which, although never proved in the way such things must be proved legally, was nevertheless a current topic in Pittsburgh, Russell's headquarters. That these accusations still exist was evidently discovered by Stanley High when gathering his material for his article on the witnesses which appeared in the *Saturday Evening Post*, September 14, 1940. Speaking of Russell and his divorce, High says there were "hints of a shadier sort."

Upon Russell's death, Rutherford noticed a prophetic uprising in his own soul and felt moved to take over the International Bible Students, lock, stock and barrel. However, he found considerable defection among the members. Large numbers had not been charmed by the "Judge's" personality;

others were frankly disgusted because Russell had not made his much promised millenium arrive; and so many decided to quit the cult to resume normal living. In 1925, Rutherford organized Jehovah's witnesses, taking into it the Russellites who insisted upon remaining gullible. The "Judge," admittedly a clever organizer, saw the urgency for new doctrines for his ignorant, superstitious followers and thereupon formulated one of the weirdest theologies in the annals of man.

Setting up an "Unholy Trinity"—organized religion, organized government and organized business—he repudiated Russell, never mentioning him in his voluminous writings any more than if he never existed. Finding the "Pastor's" six major books, with their 15,000,000 sales highly competitive, he removed them from sale and became, by self anointment, sole interpreter of God's will which, according to him, is the utter destruction of everything and everybody except Jehovah's witnesses.

This complete and brutal destruction of religion, government and business, together with all subsidiary institutions, is commanded by Rutherford with a claim of complete infallibility. The following foreword is quoted from one of the "Judge's" current booklets: "Not only do we say, but we stand ready to prove to any honest thinking person, that Judge Rutherford's explanation of the Bible, set forth in his books, answers logically and without equivocation every question of life and the hereafter that anybody has ever asked or can ask."

After one has recovered from the shock of this superb admission of egotism by one who received at least a part of his experience in the interpretation of life's values as a convict in the Federal Penitentiary in Atlanta, one wonders where the "Judge" gets his authority for being the one and only divine messenger. However, Rutherford obligingly reveals the mystery by quoting from the prophet Ezekiel, supplemented by "Judicial" interpretations:

"And, behold, six men came from the way of the higher gate, which lieth toward the north, and every man (with) a slaughter weapon in his hand; and with them came one clothed with linen, with a writer's inkhorn by his side. . . ."

Who then, is pictured by the man with the writing material by his side? According to the Scriptures he pictures Jehovah's witnesses now on earth, the faithful and true followers of Jesus Christ, who are anointed and commissioned to do a specific work in the name of Jehovah God. . . . This is the work which must be done before the slaughter begins.

Here the "Judge" shows an unusual modesty in naming the witnesses as the man in linen with the inkhorn, for every single word written in the witnesses' books and pamphlets, and every word reproduced by their phonographs, come respectively from the pen and tongue of the "Judge." Who else then, in all logic, can be the man anointed and commissioned by God and predicted by Ezekiel thousands of years ago to "the work of putting a mark in the foreheads of certain ones that they must be given an intelligent understanding of Jehovah's purpose to execute his vengeance upon the nations of 'Christendom'?"

SWEDEN STANDS FOR FREEDOM AND RELEASE FROM THE NAZI NET

MAURICE FELDMAN

MANY years ago, in a small Austrian village, I experienced some minutes of extreme tension. A rope-dancer in the market-place, without taking any precautions, executed such breakneck tricks as I have never seen since. The eyes of the spectators were fixed on his feet; again and again there came crucially dangerous seconds and just when it looked as if he would fall, he pulled himself together and somehow carried on.

I am often reminded of this childhood recollection when people ask me about the present situation in Sweden. A well known radio commentator only recently counted Sweden among the Nazi-conquered nations; a famous political writer asked me whether it was true that Sweden was "a hundred per cent National-Socialist." I usually answer these questions by giving the simile of the rope-dancer performing without any safety-device. Sweden, too, is in a way like a rope-dancer who never knows from day to day what will happen at the next step.

Since the outbreak of the second world war, Sweden has more than once, at the very last minute, evaded the plunge into the abyss. When, on February 16, 1940, the Finnish Government made its famous appeal to its Swedish brethren, millions of Swedish citizens demanded Sweden's immediate entry into the war. Even within the Cabinet grave differences of opinion appeared, which finally led to the resignation of Foreign Secretary Richard Sandler. In spite of all this, Sweden remained neutral, partly because of German threats. A similar, perhaps even more critical situation resulted during the German attack of Norway. Instead of coming to the assistance of its Norwegian brethren, the Swedish Government was forced to consent to the transport of German troops through Swedish territory. According to the official Swedish interpretation, however, this fact does not indicate the abandonment of neutrality.

The change in Sweden's foreign policy might be characterized by saying that Sweden's policy during the first months of the war had been one of passive neutrality, which then changed to a "real neutrality policy" that endeavored to adapt itself to the present situation in Europe. The fact that Sweden is situated between Germany and Russia does not necessarily mean that the Swedish Government is, in all things, a mere tool in the hands of the two dictatorships. She does, admittedly, take Germany's wishes into consideration. This is chief-

ly due to Germany's hegemony in the Baltic, but also to the fact that Sweden's economic life is, in some aspects, under German rule. Germany's share in Sweden's foreign trade amounts to about seventy per cent. The main bulk of Swedish iron ore is going out to Germany, although the Nazis are not in a position to supply the corresponding exchange products. There is, consequently, a clearing account in Sweden's favor, and she has to put up with the fact that the Third Reich is constantly in her debt for a part of the iron ore shipments.

The Nazis are not at all satisfied, however, with merely influencing the foreign and trade policy of Sweden. Again and again they have been trying to rule out Swedish independence by threats and diplomatic pressure. Thus, a few months ago, Nazi philosopher Alfred Rosenberg gave a lecture in which he made the blunt statement that there could not be any compromising on the Swedish question. "Sweden is a part of the Greater German Reich and will be incorporated into it when the Fuehrer deems it necessary." Only a few days ago, the Nazi Minister of Economy, Walter Funk, demanded the Swedish Government's consent to a Customs Union, which is to connect Greater Germany (which of course also includes Holland, Norway and Denmark) with Sweden. Funk pointed out to the Swedish Government that they would find it impossible in the long run to exclude their country from the "New Europe." This threat was recently answered by Sweden's Foreign Secretary, Christian E. Guenther. He stated among other things: "I should like to warn everyone not to go too deep into speculations about this new Europe and the position that our country is to hold there."

Would Sweden be willing to fight in the event of a German annexation by force? Would she wage war to keep up her national independence? After a conscientious review of the principles of the Swedish Government and the big political parties, this question may definitely be answered yes. Sweden is the only Scandinavian country which has been judging the Nazis without illusions. After Hitler's rise to power, Sweden, whose Government had always been strictly pacifist, began a thorough armament.

At present, all efforts are naturally concentrated on the defense of the country. Sweden has about half a million well trained and well equipped troops. (International military experts think very highly of Sweden's officers). It must not be overlooked that

the Swedish army passed on considerable quantities of its reserves to Finland during the Russo-Finnish conflict—a fifth of the air-fleet, 250 guns of heavy and medium caliber, 75 anti-aircraft guns of the latest type, 90,000 rifles and large quantities of its oil and coal stocks.

The Swedish arms and munition factories, especially the famous Bofors works, are toiling day and night for the country's defense. The widespread belief that the Swedish armament factories are working for Germany is entirely without foundation; neither is it true that Sweden is sending food supplies to Germany. The best proof of the incorrectness of this statement is the fact that the value of Sweden's export of foodstuffs in 1940, as compared to 1939, has declined by about \$250,000, because she most urgently needs all foodstuffs at her disposal for domestic consumption.

Again and again, the responsible leaders point out to the people the dangers threatening from the Nazis. Thus, Foreign Secretary Guenther says in his aforementioned speech with regard to the importance of the defense of the country, as learned from the example of others:

Experiences since the beginning of the war tell us clearly that nothing is more dangerous for a small country, situated in the vicinity of competing great powers, than to constitute a military vacuum. But with Sweden's position and our possibilities for defense, it is in our hands to decide whether we are to be looked upon as No Man's Land, which attracts the fighting of a great power as a magnet, or as a country these powers really believe capable of making a stand against aggression.

A person who knows how to read the very guarded language of Swedish diplomats under the prevailing circumstances, will clearly understand that Guenther's speech is clearly and exclusively aimed at the Axis Powers. The determination of the Swedish people to fight with all possible means against a Nazi invasion is the reason which has, up to this day, kept the Nazis from "incorporating" that country into the "Greater German Realm." In the event of such a war the Swedish army might destroy the iron ore mines and that would mean a catastrophe for the Nazis, which they would not deliberately invite.

Contrary to the Nazis' expectations, the shifting in Europe's balance of power has not made for a stronger influence of their party in Sweden. The opposite has happened: in September when the elections for Parliament took place, the Social-Democrats—about whose attitude toward the Nazis there can hardly be any doubt—won a sweeping victory. They won nineteen seats in Parliament from the Conservatives, the Liberals, the Farmers' Party and the Communists. Out of a total of 2,800,000, 1,527,621 voted for the Social-Democratic party, thus demonstrating that they are supporting the party which leads an uncompromising fight against the Nazis. The Swedish Social-Democratic party is still a member of the Socialist International, and its delegates are in the same executive committee as the British Labor Party's delegates.

In all other respects too, the relations between

the Swedish Social-Democrats, Cooperative and Trade Unions and their English parallel organizations are very close. The Communist party, which in Sweden is mainly filled from the lower strata of farm-workers and sailors, has lost two seats in Parliament. It is not so much the Hitler-Stalin agreement, as the Russo-Finnish war that has induced thousands of Communists to quit the party. It is impossible to persuade a Swedish worker that Finland is not a democratic country. This kind of propaganda might be successful in some politically untrained circles in foreign countries, but certainly not in Sweden. Most Swedish workers have relatives in Finland; they know that Finland is a democracy like the United States, Great Britain or their own country. It is, therefore, not merely incidental that former Swedish Communists have recently been enlisting as volunteers with the Finnish army.

The second action on the part of Russia by which she has lost many Communist adherents in Sweden, was the annexation of the Baltic States, especially of Estonia. The situation of the Swedes in Estonia changed radically. The Swedish Government and various private aid committees are greatly worried about the fate of the inhabitants of the Island of Raagoe, who are all Swedish, and also about that of the whole Swedish colony in Estonia. The majority are fishermen and small farmers living under restricted circumstances who, on January 1, had to yield to the Soviet Government even the few meager fields and houses they had. Swedish schools and institutions have been closed by the Russian Government, and the circulation of newspapers in the Swedish language has been strictly forbidden.

Far greater, however, than the Communists' defeat was the Nazis' debacle at the elections. In order to be spared a public defeat, the Nazis proclaimed a strike against the elections, but this very action made clear how unimportant they were, for more people voted than in the elections of 1936. The collaboration of the Swedish Nazis and the German Embassy is quite open. Thus, the Nazi propaganda tract *Dagens Eko* is distributed, 100,000 copies a day, through the Press Department of the German Embassy in Stockholm. Dozens of spies are holding "employment" in German-Swedish firms. The Swedish state-police, however, has accurate information on each individual Nazi agent and will take the necessary steps at the given moment.

The Swedish people stand as strong as ever for democracy. The free elections for Parliament, the existing rights of coalition, of unions and assemblies are proofs of this. Even if some papers, such as *Göteborgs Handels-och-Sjöfartstidning*, which is edited by Torgny Segerstedt, a professor of divinity, are sometimes confiscated on account of attacks against Germany, this proves nothing against Sweden's democracy. Extraordinary measures result from extraordinary times and to draw conclusions about Sweden's attitude from isolated incidents arising from her most difficult position, would be misleading. Democracy is still safe in Sweden.

ASTROLOGY MAY BE ABSURD BUT MILLIONS ARE SNARED BY IT

JOHN LaFARGE

WERE you ever confronted with a person who seriously believes in and practises astrology? If you were, you will acknowledge that the experience reminds you of a common trait of all cults of a superstitious or occult character: no matter how absurd is the cult, you are obliged to take rather seriously the fact that a person is devoted to it, for it involves the captivity of a human soul.

The growth of popularity for astrology in our time is an index of the degree to which people are losing their hold upon the elementary truths of Christianity.

Traditionally, the popularity of astrology is associated with periods of decadence or great public disturbance. The Greeks, who borrowed so much lore from the East at an early period in their history, did not take up the astrological cults until the Hellenistic times. It became popular in Christian Europe toward the end of the Middle Ages and the beginning of the Renaissance. Times of war, with their excitement and sense of insecurity, are favorable to the spread of astrological propaganda. A thin coating of apparent science is just enough to make it stimulate curiosity. The fact that science has revealed such countless marvels in our day gives rise to a vague confidence in the astrologer's bold promises.

The Woolworth store around the corner, which I pass every day or so, contains a display of astrological material in its front window. In Manhattan, two of the nine general daily newspapers, the *Daily News* and the *Journal-American*, publish astrological columns.

Data upon the distribution of astrological lore were published by the Boston and Cambridge branch of the American Association of Scientific Workers in a report issued on January 24 of this year. Some of the leading newspapers of the country are now printing astrological columns. In the East, the list includes the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, the *Times-Herald* of Washington, D. C., and the *Boston Traveler*. In the South-East the *Memphis Commercial-Appeal*, the *Charlotte Observer* and the *Atlanta Constitution* are listed as carrying astrological columns. Others are the *News* and the *Plain Dealer* in Cleveland, the *Ohio State Journal*, the *Herald and Examiner* and the *Daily Tribune* in Chicago. In the San Francisco area two of the four large newspapers carry astrological columns and two do not. Some papers carry regularly astrological advertisements.

Weekly and monthly magazines are among the cooperators. The *American Weekly*, which claims the largest circulation of any magazine in the world, began on May 12, 1940, a series of articles on astrology by "Hollywood's astrologer" Norvell. *Good Housekeeping*, however, has taken a firm stand against astrology. The Federal Communications Commission has ruled astrologers off the air after protest by the American Astronomical Society and the American Society of Magicians.

Little is needed to show the harmfulness of such a practice. It is plain why the Church, from Saint Augustine to the present day, has always opposed resort to astrology, even if individual churchmen at times were beguiled into playing with it.

Astrology's central idea is that the course of a person's life is determined by the relative position of the earth and sun with regard to the other planets and the stars at the exact moment of his birth. If the sun, for instance, is found moving through the constellation Libra, the Scales, at the instant when you first appear upon the earth, this indicates that your person will be of an esthetic or artistic disposition. The various conjunctions of the planets with one another or with the sun enter into the picture, since each planet lends its particular influence. It is quite obvious, for instance, that if the planet Mars is at all prominent in the skies at the hour when you begin your career, you will never be a C. O.

Naturally we are all curious to know the circumstances at our own birth, and this is ascertained by casting or calculating the horoscope. The horoscope is obtained by ascertaining from any astronomical calendar or ephemeris the state of things in the heavens when you entered this vale of tears. This is then compared with the rules provided by astrology for the signs of the Zodiac and the movements of the planets, and your prophecy is completed.

The *Baltimore Catechism* defines superstition, a sin against the First Commandment, as "attributing to a creature a perfection which belongs to God alone." I have found this to be one of those older catechism answers which no child can understand as it is given, few can remember, but which any child can understand when it is briefly explained. To imagine that any human being, by studying the planets and stars, can foretell the free and responsible actions of man is just that: it attributes to a creature that "perfection"—exact foreknowledge of human events—which belongs to God alone and

which no man can share unless God reveals it to him.

Since astrology is clearly a superstition, as here stated, one may ask: what reason is there for paying any further attention to it? Is not ridicule the best weapon?

Many an individual may be deterred by ridicule, but laughter alone will not do away with any movement which is a symptom of a deep spiritual disorder.

If the claims of astrology are seriously examined, merely from a scientific point of view, the view of their absurdity will help to disillusion many a mind which will not be influenced by ridicule.

As the herein mentioned report points out, the most painstaking investigation is unable to trace any conceivable connection between the planets and the human organism at the time of birth or at any other time. Indeed, the selection of the time of birth seems wholly arbitrary. Why not the moment of conception, or that of the first exposure to fresh air, or any one of many other critical moments in bodily development? No material is at hand for any sort of factual test of the astrologers' claims. Even the signs of the Zodiac have changed their apparent positions, through the precession of the equinoxes, over some twenty-five degrees during the past two thousand years.

We find that astrologers have failed to suggest a workable mechanism by which the stars and planets can exert their influence on human destiny. The doctrine of astrology cannot claim that it is in any way supported by statistical evidence from observed correlations, and until such correlations are established scientists cannot accept the precepts of astrology. Scientists can do a valuable service to society by pointing out publicly that the predictions lack every conceivable scientific foundation.

As for the modern attraction of such antiquated doctrines, the psychologists are ready with an explanation. The Executive Council of the Society for Psychological Study of Social Issues observes in their statement on this matter:

The principal reason why people turn to astrology and to kindred superstitions is that they lack in their own lives the resources necessary to solve serious personal problems confronting them. Feeling blocked and bewildered, they yield to the pleasant suggestion that a golden key is at hand—a simple solution—an ever-present help in time of trouble. This belief is more readily accepted in times of disruption and crisis, when the individual's normal safeguards against gullibility are broken down. . . .

Faith in astrology or in any other occult practice is harmful in so far as it encourages an unwholesome flight from the persistent problems of real life.

This is extremely true, as it stands, and accords with the personal observations of many a parish priest. But it leaves unsaid a very pertinent comment upon the current craze for astrology.

Why do people turn to these "golden" and painless "keys" and pleasant solutions for the miseries and contradictions of life? Why do they not "face reality," as the psychologists insist (rightly enough) that they should do? Behind the phenomenon that the astronomers and psychologists deplore lies what further phenomenon?

To this question there remains a simple and definite answer. Irreligious propaganda has long since undermined the sound and rationally motivated religious faith of the millions. What irreligion has begun, education without religion has consummated. The psychologists speak of facing reality. But the greatest of all psychologists, the Divine psychologist Himself, also spoke of "facing reality," only He used a different metaphor. He called it, bearing the Cross. He promised to refresh the weary with living waters and the Bread of Life. He promised peace, light, complete integration of the human person. His yoke, He said, was easy and His burden light. But He offered no "golden keys," no facile, sugary solutions for personal problems. Light, peace and refreshment were to be won through the school of suffering and through profound, unwavering adherence to His teaching as to man's true origin, man's eternal destiny, and the law of the Father's Providence; not through any imaginary influence of stars or planets.

Deluded victims of astrological hoaxes deserve our pity. Think of the poor boobs who send twenty-five cents to the horoscope column to settle their problems of love and business! God help the poor devils. But their folly is but a reflection, a mere ghost of the insane folly of those spirits who made it their business to remove all support, in reason and in Divine Faith, from those who wish to find a meaning in life, a meaning in suffering, and a help from above in the solution of personal difficulties for which any honest scientist or psychologist—and, thank God, there are plenty of them—will tell you that he has no solution.

"We need the Cosmic Psychiatrist," writes a great and humble astronomer, not astrologer, Harlow Shapley, in order to heal "the subtle, half-sick, screwy mind of man." Indeed we need Him, and only His healing can save the world in its present insanity. But it is not His followers who have made the world screwy and sent it off on the quest of horoscopes and cusps and celestial "houses." Thoughtful scientists are retracing the steps which brought dogmatic materialism into disrepute. But a vast, popular pseudo-science still persists and is used as an engine against any spiritual manner of "facing reality" over a great part of the civilized world. Human nature brings slow retribution for the destruction of religious faith. With the inexorable movement of the heavens themselves the old questions arise anew in the human heart: Whence am I? What rules my life? What determines my fate? Whither am I going? What does it all mean? If men are deprived of the simple, clear teaching given by the Divine Physician, they will seek the answer, like Brutus, in the stars, or the crystal globe, or the spirits of the dead, or some other nonsense. Like the Devil in Rostand's *Last Night of Don Juan*, superstition provides a ghastly magnifying glass for the final sorting out of truth from falsehood.

Whatever lesson astrology may read to the enemies of religion, to Catholics it proclaims an urgent call to bring back misled millions to the knowledge and faith of Christ.

WINTER JOURNEY: 1809-1865

PAUL L. BLAKELY, S.J.

WHEN Thomas and Nancy Hanks Lincoln made ready their cabin on the Big South Fork of Nolin's Creek, the perfume of the wild crab-apple blossoms still lingered on the soft air. But now winter had come, and the cabin, loosely-built, dirt-floored, was cold. Thomas threw more wood on the open fire, and then went to look at Nancy lying in the bed, sleeping the sleep of exhaustion. She held a little baby in the crook of her arm. He put another bear-skin over them, and left the cabin. He must bring in some women-folk to give Nancy and the baby the care that only women could give. The Sparrows lived down the road a short piece. He would go looking for them.

Some say that the "granny woman" to whom Thomas had spoken, failed to come. Others like to think that one, perhaps two, young mothers from the neighborhood, were present, and even give their names. But there is no evidence for this that satisfies. All we know is that Thomas and baby Sarah, the first-born, were there. It is probable that Nancy brought her son into the world with only such aid as Thomas could give her. Kentucky was still a pioneer country, and the lot of women was hard.

The winter journey began on that Sunday morning, February 12, 1809.

A few hours later, Tom and Betsy Sparrow, kin-folk of Nancy's, who lived two miles down the road, came to the cabin. But their adopted son, Dennis Hanks, reached the Big South Fork first, for he had put up the road as soon as Thomas Lincoln announced, "Nancy's got a boy baby." He was curious, this nine-year old, to see what kind of a play-mate the baby would make. Later he said: "Its skin looks just like red cherry pulp squeezed dry, in wrinkles."

"What air ye goin' to name him, Nancy?" he asked.

"Abraham, after his grandfather."

"Kin I hold him?"

"Yes, but be keerful, Dennis, fur you air the fust boy he's ever seen."

Dennis tickled the baby, with untoward results. Abraham began to squirm and to cry "like no let-up."

"Here, take him, Aunt," said Dennis, turning to Betsy Sparrow, who looked on admiringly: "He'll never amount to much."

As evening came on, Nancy nursed her "boy baby," and sang to him. She sang to him songs that had come across the great water to Virginia, and had been brought through the Cumberland Gap, and down the Ohio, by the settlers of Kentucky. She loved best "Barbara Allen," but she often sang

about the "Fair Eleanor," ("Ellender," she pronounced it) and about "the Romish lady brought up in Poperie." Then she hollowed a place for him at her side, and they slept. In her frail keeping, and in God's, was held that night the babe who was to become our greatest American. On skins laid on the floor Thomas and little Sarah sleep. The wind rises, and then is still.

A few miles to the south and west, in Christian County, Kentucky (in that part that is now Todd County), another baby slept that night. He was just eight months old. But he did not sleep in a cabin, loosely-built, dirt-floored, and his mother did not hollow a place for him in a rude bed. He was of the quality, the son of people of consequence. His name was Jefferson Davis.

Four hundred miles and more to the east, in a manor house in one of the fairest counties of the Old Dominion, a little boy of two years was also sleeping. He came of a long line of men distinguished in the service of the state. His name was Robert Edward Lee.

(Robert E. Lee, of Virginia, Abraham Lincoln and Jefferson Davis, of Kentucky—would God we had men like you in these troubled days, and women like Nancy Hanks!)

Half a century passes. Thomas Lincoln leaves Kentucky for Indiana, and when Abraham is nine years old, his first great sorrow comes in the death of his mother, Nancy Hanks. A strange malady ran through the little community at Pigeon Creek, "the milk sickness." Those who fell ill usually died quickly, for medical aid was useless. Betsy and Thomas Sparrow passed, then others of the Lincoln kin. Nancy fell ill, and within a week, was dead. Years later, Herndon wrote:

The mother knew she was going to die, and called the children to her bedside. She was very weak, and the children leaned over while she gave her last message. Placing her feeble hand on little Abe's head, she told him to be kind and good to his father and sister: to both she said: "Be good to one another," expressing the hope that they might live, as they had been taught by her, to love their kindred and to worship God. Amid the miserable surroundings of a home in the wilderness Nancy Hanks passed then across the dark river. Though of lowly birth, the victim of poverty and hard usage, she takes a place in history as the mother of a son who liberated a race of men. . . . She had done her work in this world. Stoop-shouldered, thin-breasted, sad—at times miserable—groping through the perplexities of life, without prospect of any betterment in her condition, she passed from earth little dreaming of the grand future that lay in store for the ragged, hapless little boy who stood at her bedside in the last days of her life.

"She had done her work in this world." A grateful world, realizing in its inmost heart what a true woman's work is, will never forget her.

Once more Thomas Lincoln, with his new wife, Sarah Bush Johnson, always a true mother to the boy, and Sarah and Abraham emigrate, this time into Illinois. The growing boy struggles to learn, reading what books he can find, but thinking, thinking, always thinking, as if driven by some interior force the purpose of which he did not yet suspect. He runs for office, and is moderately suc-

cessful in a term or two in the State Legislature, and a term in Congress. Then he settles down in Springfield for the work of a country lawyer. But the thoughts that he had thought begin to bear fruit. (Later he said that it took him forty years to write the Gettysburg Address.) He challenges the great Stephen Douglas, and loses in the race for the United States Senate.

Two years later, Lincoln had been elected President, and Henry Villard was assigned by his New York newspaper to go to Springfield, and report. He was an unusually acute young man, for he soon learned to value this "lean, lank, indescribably gawky figure, [with] an odd-featured, wrinkled, inexpressive, and altogether uncomely face." But at first he feared that Lincoln was "too good-natured" and "easy-going." "I doubt Mr. Lincoln's capacity for the task of bringing light and peace out of the chaos that will surround him," he wrote. "A man of good heart and good intention, he is not firm. The times demand a Jackson." Soon he perceived that Lincoln was something more than a narrator of funny stories. If he had the simplicity of the dove, he also had the wisdom of a whole nest of serpents. Villard finally concluded that "Old Abe" would do pretty well.

Lincoln himself was not so sure. He told funny stories to put off importunate questioners, but also to disguise the fact that he was miserable, sick at heart, filled with nameless terrors that beset him by day, and haunted his nights, until he did not know whether he was dreaming or seeing visions that foretold woe to himself, and perhaps death. "He looks more pale and careworn than heretofore," recorded Villard on December 14.

The winter journey was bitter. But he must push on, or perish.

On February 11, 1861, the day before his birthday, Abraham Lincoln, with Mrs. Lincoln, harboring in her tortured brain the virus that at last overturned her reason, and their son, Robert, rode to the Great Western Depot, to entrain for Washington. A number of friends were waiting for him there. They came to take his hand and say good-bye, and they noted that his face was pale and quivering, and that he could hardly speak. A few minutes before the train left, he went outside, and took his place on the platform. The night had been rainy, and day dawned raw and cold. As he removed his hat, the crowd too uncovered, and in a voice at first high-pitched, then gradually sinking, Lincoln spoke his unpremeditated farewell:

My friends: No one not in my situation can appreciate my feeling of sadness at this parting. To this place, to the kindness of these people, I owe everything; here I have been a quarter of a century and have passed from a young man to an old man. Here my children have been born and one is buried. I now leave, not knowing when or whether I ever may return, to a task before me greater than that which rested upon Washington. Without the assistance of that Divine Being who ever attended him I cannot succeed, with this assistance I cannot fail. Trusting in Him who can go with me and remain with you and be everywhere for good, let us confidently hope that all will yet be well. In that same Almighty Being, I place my reliance for support,

and I hope you, my friends, will all pray that I may receive that Divine assistance without which I cannot succeed, but with which success is certain. To His care I am commending you, as, I hope, in your prayers you will commend me. I bid you an affectionate farewell.

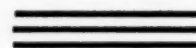
"The tears were not yet dry on some faces when the train faded into the gray in the east," writes Sandburg. Some denied that there were tears in Lincoln's eyes. "But he had a face with dry tears," said one. "He was a man who often had dry tears," the tears of a sorrow that tears at the heart, and makes man a weak thing—or a strong.

Morning broke, cold, rainy, gusty, a chill, penetrating damp in the air; the typical Washington April weather that tries to turn back to winter. It was April 15, 1865, and Abraham Lincoln was dead. The man who had said that he hoped all his fellow-citizens would work "with malice toward none; with charity to all; with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right," now belonged to the world's immortals.

The winter journey was at an end.

TEN BEST MOVIES PLUS A FEW WORST

THOMAS J. FITZMORRIS



THE annual inventory of the Hollywood product, taking the form of critical judgments on the ten best films of the year, generally satisfies no one so completely as the critics. Even if the plain man were not given to unaccountable detours of taste from the collective better judgment of the professional critics, he would note a decided unevenness in such lists. For some of the lauded films were technically excellent and morally sound, and others were merely technically excellent. It is obvious that selection of the "best" pictures is a limited choice for anyone who accepts the Decalog without reservation. Whereas the commercial critic has but one taboo, that of appearing too conscientiously moral, which is a possible, not a probable, pitfall, the practicing Christian must eliminate a large number of productions on non-technical grounds. For example, the latter finds it impossible to accept divorce or suicide as a mere theatrical device, however effectively used; when marriage is recognized as a Sacrament, it ceases to be a legitimate object of fun.

But the notable films have been, on the whole, acceptable to both critic and moralist, and the exceptions do not at all argue for a return to that "freedom" in the selection and treatment of film matter which tied the screen down so long to tawdry triangles and vulgar display. Ten outstanding films may easily be noted as free from serious taint,

the majority approved for the family, and yet they are the artistic equals of any production released the past year. They explore many fields, deal with a rich diversity of human personality, and point a startling contrast of dramatic and photographic technique.

Since biography has become a screen staple, it is fortunate that the year's best examples dealt with lives which may be investigated with profit. *Abe Lincoln in Illinois* was a brilliant evocation of the great President's middle period, taking its stature and eloquence from the actual speeches which reveal the man even more than the well-remembered incidents of his life. In *Edison the Man*, the electrical wizard was brought out of the laboratory and humanized in a film which combined the adventure of pioneering with warming character revelation. *Knute Rockne, All American* presented a more popular but no less vital figure whose coaching career supplied a springboard for a simple restatement of fundamental values. All three films were marked by understanding direction and acting performances which were definitely of the very first rank.

For contrast, *Rebecca*, directed with suspenseful brilliance by Alfred Hitchcock, was a superlative type of entertainment grounded simply in the revelation of human nature. Adult in the implications of evil centered in the unseen Rebecca, it held its moral ground and combined power with subtlety. *Our Town* dealt with far less vivid personages in a more idyllic setting, yet it was a moving epitome of real life, not as the scenarist imagines it but as it is actually lived. To criticize it as lacking full spiritual vigor is to quarrel with the whole background of the films, and, indeed, of the nation. *Pride and Prejudice*, of course, was a period piece, rich in caricature and the comedy of manners, faultlessly played and produced, and generally an exhilarating *tour de force*.

Few motion pictures have so completely realized the peculiar advantages of the screen technique as *The Long Voyage Home*. Barring a coarse atmospheric passage, it was a thoroughly welcome film departure, superior in the arts of photography, direction and acting. John Ford's solution of his problem, how to make a unified experience out of a number of character sketches, was both practical and artistic. Again in *Foreign Correspondent*, the direction of the film was its best achievement. The film marked the apotheosis of the suspense technique which Hitchcock has made his hallmark, and thus it could not fail to be a vastly entertaining production. It is difficult to subscribe to the satisfaction of a subtle critic who envisioned this film impregnating an unsuspecting audience with propaganda. The propaganda content was, to say the least, latent until the close of the story, and along the way it could not stand up against an immensely exciting yarn such as a more nimble-minded E. Phillips Oppenheim might have written.

Rich in meanings that were both obvious and welcome, however, was *The Howards of Virginia*, which brought to life a decisive period in our history now chiefly recalled by the number on a bill

pending in the House of Representatives. Ironically, we faced a similar choice between independence, and colonial status then, and there is no doubt about the wisdom of the decision which was made. On the lighter side, for pure entertainment which is at the same time notable for taste and production skill, one would go far to better a choice of one, any one, of Deanna Durbin's films. *Spring Parade*, being the latest, may be for convenience reckoned the best.

Hollywood was not represented by such films only, however, and some of the films invariably placed on the newspaper critic's list indicate that authority is not overly concerned with morality as a factor in excellence. Two such choices further indicate a strange contradiction of principle. *The Grapes of Wrath* aroused the reviewers to spirited discussion and profound thoughts on the condition of mankind by presenting an economic evil. And by an easy transition, opposition to the film was held in contempt as "escapism," even though it might be on the grounds that the argument was essentially materialistic, or that partisan and doctrinaire conclusions were imposed on an admitted injustice. Yet *The Philadelphia Story*, *The Letter* and other pictures in which the evil was primarily moral evoked equal enthusiasm based on the shallowest sort of "art for art's sake" standards. A vulgarly suggestive farce, like *Seven Sinners*, or *The Great Profile*, may be criticized adversely but never on the score that it offends morality or decency. It is apparently very wrong in the professional critic's code for a man to be hungry, but it is a source of hilarity that he is lecherous. Basically, the conflict is between naturalism and Christian morals, and no cant about artistic freedom can gloss over that fact. In this field, as in most others, the norms of criticism start at opposite poles.

It is a bit difficult to understand why a picture like *Strange Cargo* should have been made in the first place, but it may receive ignominious mention as a curious aberration of Hollywood's commercial enterprise. It was probably two-thirds stupidity which led the producers to blunder into that weird mixture of sensationalism and perverted religion, and the charitable explanation is supported somewhat by the studio's subsequent revision of the film.

Again, *Too Many Girls*, a lackluster musical to begin with, assumed the added burden of a gratuitous insult to Catholics on the subject of Confession. When one considers the multitude of motion pictures which fail to be box-office successes for purely technical reasons, it passes understanding why the businessmen in the industry should be willing to add formidable moral hazards. There will always be enough insipid stories, pointless direction and unimaginative acting to keep the screen a good day's work from perfection as a medium of entertainment without its attempting to liberalize the traditional moral code or, for that matter, preaching controversial crusades. If anyone be inclined to argue that point, let him first sit through such an expensive bore as *Moon Over Burma*, or *I Take This Woman*.

"DEMOCRACY"

EVEN the theatre is now following the lead of the newspapers and the moving pictures to impress upon us the need for national preparedness. After these years of inertia, we can afford to lose no time, but it is well to remember that this country needs a kind of defense that is not supplied by tanks and aircraft.

The president of Fordham University expressed this thought eloquently when in a recent public address he observed that we tell only part of the truth when we proclaim that we intend to fight for the preservation of "democracy." For, said Father Gannon, history tells us of democracies which flourished for a time, and then fell because they harbored practices which were completely incompatible with the true concept of democracy. If democracy means a rule by the people, directly or through freely chosen representatives, for the highest welfare of the people, it is a form of government which free men will welcome. But "democracy" is a mockery, when under the forms of democratic government immoral practices are permitted to flourish, and even to receive the protection of alleged "laws."

All depends, then, upon what we mean by "democracy." For there is a democracy which can promote anti-social customs, and a democracy which respects the natural law and the principles upon which alone a Christian civilization can rest. No fact is clearer in our national history than the persuasion of the Founders of this Republic that our form of democracy could not endure, unless the American people cultivated religion and morality, both in their lives as individuals, and as the guiding and controlling principles of their Government. So deep was Washington's conviction that, in his *Farewell Address*, he earnestly counselled the foundation of schools and institutions of learning in which our young people would be prepared for the duties as citizens by a thorough training in religion and in a code of morals founded upon religion. The democracy which the Fathers thought they had formed was not a pagan, but a Christian democracy. What they wished to establish was not simply rule by the people, but rule by a Christian people.

That we have departed far from the designs of the Founders is obvious. No longer are we a Christian people. Practices wholly at variance with Christian principles, as accepted by our American forefathers, are now fully protected by law. The very schools which our young people frequent make an adequate training in religion and morality a practical impossibility for nine out of every ten American children. We have much for which to make reparation, but it is not yet too late to initiate the work. The preparedness which this country most sorely needs must begin with a return to God in our private lives and in the conduct of this Government. A pagan people cannot and will not fight for the preservation of a Christian democracy which is the only democracy worth having.

EDITO

FLAGS AND MUSIC

MANY years ago a member of the Senate said that when war threatens, brass bands and flag-waving should be prohibited. Martial music, he thought, disturbed the process of calm reasoning, and the sight of flags waving in the breeze blurred the beholder's mental vision. We may yet prohibit whiskey, but not flags or music, yet the hint is useful. To go to war, to stay out of war, to aid any country at war, are questions to be decided by our intelligence, and not by our emotions. As the aesthetes, following the philosophers, say, the emotions are good servants, but bad masters.

COMMUNISTS

THE reports of the Dies Committee and the threat of war have turned public attention to the work of propagandists in this country. We have too many propagandists of the wrong kind, it has become abundantly clear, and too few who by fair and open methods are trying to popularize the old Christian traditions upon which the permanence and well being of this Government must rest. Most unfortunately, many of the wrong kind of propagandists have found their way into our publicly supported schools and universities. In that safe fortress, "academic freedom" affords them an opportunity to teach their anti-Christian and subversive tenets which could hardly be bettered in the Soviet Republics.

Religious-minded teachers have been familiar with this unhealthy condition for years. But their protest against poisoning the minds of unformed youth either has gone unnoted, or has been sternly rebuked. State and city officials, they have been reminded, are not empowered, and should not be, to inquire into the philosophical or religious opinions of men and women seeking, or occupying, positions as teachers. The use of any power of this nature would establish an unhallowed union of church and state, it is contended, and thus throw open the gate to spy-hunters and witch-burners. Further, it would create ill feeling among the pupils and students, based upon differences of creed, and would later disturb the union and harmony which should exist among all citizens.

There is a large element of truth in this re-

JUDGE AND JURY

WHILE the long-delayed Acheson report does not fully meet every expectation, it points to a number of needed reforms in the administration of the National Labor Act. If even the mildest of these is accepted by Congress much will be done to control the excesses of bureaucracy. Assuredly no one set of men should be permitted to act as prosecutor and judge, for to look for impartiality here is to demand too much from virtue, as we find it among political appointees. But only the minority Groner report, it seems to us, sufficiently safeguards the right of appeal to the courts.

ISTS THE SCHOOLS

buke. As long as we insist that come what may, the American school system must be completely divorced from religious and moral influences, it is not easy to establish standards which will debar atheists and Communists from teaching and administrative positions. The Federal and all State constitutions forbid religious tests as a qualification for public office, whether the office be that of President of the United States or teacher in a country elementary school. It is difficult, then, to establish proper standards, but not impossible. The proper solution would seem to lie in the enactment of legislation barring from office citizens whose political creed teaches the fitness or necessity of destroying this form of government by violent means, or of undermining those moral standards which find expression in our laws. But it is easier to outline such legislation than to write it in detail. In this as in all other legislation, rights must be respected wherever they are found, and no one wishes to fight Communism by denying any Communist the least of his civil rights. The burden of proof would in every case rest upon the authorities, and the right of appeal should be safeguarded.

New York is but one of several American cities which are conducting an investigation of the work of Communists and other anti-American propagandists in the schools. The findings may lead to a long-needed partial reform. But the only real reform is a system of schools in which, as Washington held, every American child can be taught religion and morality.

AMERICA FIRST

PRESIDENT Hutchins, of the University of Chicago, may not have expressed in his nationwide radio address, the prevailing opinion on the Lend-and-Lease bill. But there can be no doubt that he expressed a conviction which is entertained by a growing number of Americans. In spite of such unworthy taunts as those uttered by Ernest E. Gibson, when he said that Dr. Hutchins "may, unwittingly, be giving solace to Hitler and Goebbels," this conviction should be freely discussed.

Mr. Gibson apparently wishes us to infer that no man may speak as Dr. Hutchins has spoken, without compromising his devotion to the welfare of the American people. In that case, he would do better to come out openly, and with no reference, by way of contrast, to "the true Americanism and true patriotism," which he ascribes to the Association of which he was recently made president. If we are to begin a battle for democracy in every part of the world by suppressing democratic free speech in this country, the sooner we are made aware of that fact, the more easily can preparations be made to defend democracy at home.

It is Dr. Hutchins' belief that "we must ask ourselves whether we shall serve suffering humanity better everywhere by going into this war, or by staying out." We have heard one answer to this question. It has come to us from high quarters, and while we do not question its sincerity, we are not disposed to accept it without serious testing. We do not propose to go to war, this answer runs; what we wish is to secure our own safety by giving to Great Britain all aid short of war.

Who can draw the line beyond which aid becomes war, or an involvement that forces us into war? It is Dr. Hutchins' belief, shared by thousands of his fellow-Americans, that the policy now under consideration by Congress will, if adopted, drag us into war despite our wishes. If tanks are not enough, if the aircraft we supply prove insufficient, if the conversion of our naval bases into British war-stations fails to provide the aid needed to insure victory to Great Britain, China and other beleaguered democracies, what shall be expected of us, and can reasonably be asked? The answer can only be that we shall be committed to an aid which involves in actual war not only the material resources of this country, but its last financial resources, and the blood of our young men.

It will be argued that this answer reeks of despair and pessimism. Be it so. But it forces us to regard other factors, the chief of which is our willingness to go to the aid of other countries with all that we have.

As Dr. Hutchins observes, our pressing domestic problems seem to be overlooked in the eager desire of many, especially in official position, to help peoples abroad. Should these problems become more acute, as well they may, the aid we shall be able to afford Great Britain will properly be rated as negligible. We shall then "be committed to obligations abroad which we cannot perform." No

doubt Dr. Hutchins' critics speak with sincerity when they protest that their first interest is the welfare of this country. We do not question their motives, and we freely admit their patriotism. All we ask is that they deem it at least possible that men who differ from them may not only be patriotic, but right.

That the world is in a turmoil which may issue in strange and menacing results before another month has passed, it would be folly to question. Most certainly we must prepare to meet force by force. It is not yet too late to make adequate preparation. If we do that, we need fear no enemy.

Our first task, then, is to build an adequate defense for this country, not for China. Our first line of defense is the United States. By "adequate," we mean a force that can meet every attack, even in the very unlikely event of the total defeat of Great Britain, and beat it back. We have the men and the money. We can soon have all the mechanical equipment necessary for the manufacture of war-materials.

But our first interest must be, always, our own defense. Only when that is secured, can we be of aid to the rest of the world.

A GREAT LIBERAL

WHEN Mr. Justice McReynolds retired from the place which he had occupied on the bench of the Supreme Court for more than a quarter of a century, he was characterized by many editorial writers as a "reactionary," "ultra-conservative," and "set in his opposition to liberalism." But much depends upon one's definition of "liberalism."

The current ideal of liberalism seems to be that of a Government which by a multiplicity of rules or edicts regulates the individual and his acts down to the last minute detail, and denies him an appeal to independent courts. That ideal has been realized, fairly well, in Germany, Italy and the Soviet Republics, but not, as yet, in the United States. It was the former Justice's hope that it would never be realized, and to that type of liberalism, he long ago set himself in opposition. To his mind, as to Jefferson's, the government which asserted its authority when the liberty of the individual, or the general welfare, was imperiled, and for the rest encouraged initiative and independence, could alone be styled liberal.

In his conviction that the preservation of the constitutional rights of the several States was as necessary as the full protection of the rights of the Federal Government, the former Justice represented the mind of the Supreme Court consistently and repeatedly expressed from the first clash down to 1937. Yet he was quick to draw the line beyond which no State might exercise authority, and he did this notably when the State of Oregon attempted to force all children into State-supported schools. For that decision, if for no other, all Catholics, and all Americans devoted to true liberalism, will gratefully remember that great liberal, James C. McReynolds.

AT THE ELEVENTH HOUR

WE who are getting on in years need consolation. We have accomplished very little in life. Our companions, or very many of them, have passed away, just as have the hopes and ambitions of our early years. We feel that we are the last leaf on a barren tree. It is a leaf that still clings, but the next blast will probably bring it down, and whirl it away. We cannot quite understand why, in view of our, to us, undoubted abilities, our life has been such a failure.

Now all this is very sad. But what many of us oldsters need more than consolation is a jolt now and then to shake us out of our preoccupation with our petty failures and also, as Archbishop Porter used to say, with our still more petty virtues. In the Gospel for tomorrow (Saint Matthew, xx, 1-16) we can get that jolt.

Many of the trials of which we pathetically complain arise from our conviction that we are entitled to special privileges as workers in the vineyard. We have worked since "early in the morning," we say to ourselves, and certainly we ought to rank above that crowd of fellows who stood around as though waiting for a reward from the Government for not working, and then came in just before the work-day closed.

Perhaps there is just a twinge of conscience, when we remind ourselves about our hard work. There should be, at any rate. What about that hour just before noon, spent in activities which certainly had more to do with a jug of wine than with grape-gathering? What of that time when we paused for just a little chat, and the pause lengthened into an hour? If eight hours constitute a work-day, how many of our days have reached 480 minutes? Perhaps if we think less about past work, and more about the work that we ought to do now, the results will be better both for the vineyard and ourselves.

Were we really desirous that the work in the vineyard be done properly, we would not criticise the eleventh-hour arrivals, but welcome them. It will also help us to get a truer view of ourselves and of the work at hand, to reflect that these late-comers may do more in an hour than we in eight. One hour of hard intelligent work is worth far more than many hours of half-hearted application.

One morning, a young man looked up from his office desk, and saw a defect in the machinery of a nearby oil-tank which, if not at once remedied, would cause an explosion, and almost certainly kill dozens of workers. It was not his task to care for this machinery, and he knew that he would probably lose his life in trying to set the mechanism aright. But he did not hesitate. As he ran toward the tank, flames burst out and seared him from head to foot, yet he kept on, and reaching the mechanism made the adjustment that prevented the tank from exploding. In one brief glorious moment of the eleventh hour, he displayed a heroism which we in all our years shall never equal, for he gave his life to save his fellows. His heroism mirrors the teaching of the parable that what counts with God is not length of service, but quality.

CORRESPONDENCE

GOOD WILL

EDITOR: Anent the misinterpretation of Saint Luke II, 14, censured by O. in his letter (January 18) it seems a few comments may be in order. The interpretation, or rather the citation of the text, is justifiable on at least three counts: from the text itself, from at least one commentator worthy of hearing and even from a grammatical standpoint.

First, the text itself. I read in the Greek New Testament (which Saint Jerome translated into Latin): *doka en hypsistois theo kai epi ges eirene en anthropois eudokia*. In a critical text I have at hand, a single edition is cited as giving the equivalent of *bonae voluntatis*, the genitive, *eudokias*. Hence, the Greek is: good will to men.

The great Bossuet, bishop of Meaux, a man whose hatred of Protestant formulae knew no bounds, and like O. also a graduate of a Jesuit school, has this short commentary on the text in question:

Peace on earth to men of good will. The word of the original which we translate *good will* means God's good will for us and indicates that peace is given to men beloved of God. The original reads word for word: "Glory to God in the highest: peace on earth, good will on the part of God among men." This has always been the reading in the churches of the East. Those of the East return to it when they sing, Peace on earth to men of good will, that is to say, first to those whom God wishes well; and in the second place, to those who themselves have a good will, since the effect of the good will that God has for us is to inspire us with a good will toward Him.

I am sure that in what concerns the grammar of *bonae voluntatis* the teachers at Xavier in Cincinnati must have said something about an objective genitive somewhere along the line. With just such a genitive I think we may hit a possible solution: "Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace to men for good will (that they may have it)." This seems reasonable in the light of Bossuet's comments.

Possibly O. would be surprised if he knew that Oriental Churches in communion with Rome use the handle at the end of the *Pater Noster* in their Liturgy: "For Thine is the power and the kingdom and the glory." O. is to be complimented for his zeal for orthodoxy, but I think the text he chose in this instance was unfortunate. He has my sympathy in the matter of Christmas cards. But isn't it better that cards should bear some reference to God in place of such meaningless expressions as "Happy Yuletide" or that least common denominator, "Season's Greetings"? At any rate it seems to me at least that "Peace on earth, good will to men" can hardly be termed pagan nor should the use of it be indicative of the Pollyanna complex.

Spokane, Wash.

JOHN C. GEARY, S.J.

QUOTES

EDITOR: Perhaps the following quotation from Margaret Yeo's *Life of Saint Francis Xavier* will afford some satisfaction to both Imelda C. Rausch (with whom the present writer is in total agreement) and R. Kelly, your correspondent of the issue of January 25.

The words are those of an altar boy given in answer to a query of the Saint: "They say, Father," was the naively blunt answer, "that you are a Saint, but that you say Mass too fast."

Oak Park, Ill.

SACERDOS

INTER-FAITH MEETINGS

EDITOR: In line with Father Connell's timely warning (AMERICA, January 25) against three-faiths conferences, I should like to call attention to two documents in which His Holiness Pope Leo XIII expressed his disapproval of such gatherings: first, *Longinqua oceani*, January 6, 1895, letter addressed to the Bishops of this country; second, *Coetus in foederatis*, September 18, 1895, letter to the Most Rev. Francis Satolli, Titular Archbishop of Lepanto and Apostolic Delegate to the United States.

That the illustrious Pontiff felt it necessary twice within one year to ban such conferences, is highly significant.

Esopus, N. Y.

JOHN F. BYRNE, C.S.S.R.

PHILOSOPHER

EDITOR: Startling indeed was the discovery that AMERICA apparently approved, in H. C. McGinnis' article (December 28, 1940), the statement that: "The present war is not a war for commercial supremacy, territorial expansion, or of racial prejudice. It is a war of principles."

The statement is false on at least two counts. In the first place, history has taught us that wars are never fought over principles. It seems to be something in the makeup of man that principles are only defended by principles and only property is defended by war.

In the second place, from the standpoint of logic, effects never rise above the nature of their causes. The present crisis arose out of territorial demands, and hence the ensuing struggle could never claim for itself the honor of defending principles. As territorial conquest it began and as territorial conquest only can it end.

It is not a question of carrying the torch for dictators but of keeping our heads and the records straight. If there are, as Mr. McGinnis suggests, such principles involved, America has no right to stay out of the struggle. Let us keep our heads and take a good long look before we leap.

St. Louis, Mo.

SEMINARIAN

CRUSADE

EDITOR: Arnold Lunn last week stated that the question of American intervention is a question for Americans to decide and that he is not concerned.

I am glad that Mr. Lunn is not concerned and wish that a few more of his countrymen were of the same bent. In this he shows a moral viewpoint which is lacking in his fellow Englishmen now in this country trying to involve us in war. The straightforwardness of these Englishmen in no way alters the fact that they are foreigners who are zealously engaged in a deliberate attempt to embroil a peaceful nation in war.

I am thankful that Arnold Lunn sees the moral evil in such a practice and refrains from indulging in it. But his article has the same effect as if he were urging us to get in the war.

We all realize that England's side is more justifiable than Germany's. But when he says that Hitler can be compared with anti-Christ, that the Nazis are infidels, and that every thinking Englishman is inspired in this war not only by a love of England, but also by love of a religion, race or political ideal, and that the war is a crusade for millions of Englishmen, does he not thereby encourage us to get into the war to fight a glorious crusade?

It is strange how idealistic people become in time of war! Is it because they realize that it is almost impossible to find any worldly justification for such a terrible evil? Whenever I hear a war called a crusade, I shudder. I like to think of Xavier and Paul as the true crusaders.

Milwaukee, Wis.

DAVID KEYSER

THEOLOGIAN

EDITOR: Regarding the amount of time which should be devoted to Mass, while opinions of private individuals are interesting, it might be useful to cite the opinions of moral theologians, who are supposed to be experts in such matters.

They say that Mass should take no less than twenty minutes and not much more than half an hour. One very active Religious Order, which makes no bones about taking liturgical short-cuts (with due permission) when the greater glory of God and work for souls make such short-cuts desirable, has a rule directing its priests to take at least half an hour in saying Mass, but not much more; and this half-hour does not include the sermon and distribution of Holy Communion, time for which must be added to the half hour consumed merely in saying Mass. Finally, aside from mitigating circumstances, it would seem to be a venial sin for a priest to say Mass in notably less than half an hour, while moralists commonly say that a priest who says Mass in less than fifteen minutes commits a mortal sin. And in some places a priest who does so will be suspended.

In cases where practical necessity makes unavoidable a somewhat hurried though rubrically correct Mass followed by a very short thanksgiving, I personally find it hard to see that God is offended

and think that, rather, He is greatly pleased. One who has little and gives that little, gives all. Nevertheless we must not lose sight of the fact that a hasty Mass, followed by little or no thanksgiving, is objectively an abuse which, because of practical necessity, we tolerate reluctantly rather than consider a normal or desirable mode of procedure.

Maryland.

J. I. S.

NEUTRALITY LEAGUE

EDITOR: I cannot resist the urge to answer the letter of A. O'Reilly about the Women's Neutrality League (AMERICA, February 1).

While no one can question for a moment the high motives of the Catholic women who constitute the membership (it is gratifying to note they do not include the word *Catholic* in the name of their organization), yet one cannot but be doubtful of the wisdom of their decisions. Truly, no one wants war, but is a total peace, which they so glibly advocate, the answer? Let us see.

Poland is today enjoying a total peace. There is no fighting in Poland. Holland, France, Belgium—all are similarly blessed. Peace, no war.

Is that the sort of peace these good ladies of the Women's Neutrality League seek for us? Or have they just been misled? Let us hope it is the latter.

Larchmont, N. Y.

W. M. CLAYTON

ACTU

EDITOR: I was delighted to see AMERICA's reasonable comment (January 18) on my article on the Association of Catholic Trade Unionists which appeared in the *Nation* for January 4. However, I think it is a bit fatuous to say that the sort of thing I have written militates against giving the Pope a voice in peace conferences.

First, I was not discussing anything of the sort. Second, neither I nor, I believe, the majority of those who share my general point of view feel that the Pope should not have a voice in such matters; on the contrary, I think the Pope stands high among those who wish and could plan for a decent settlement.

Your criticism—that I wrongly fear the ACTU's connections with the Vatican—may be right, and I hope it is. What I wanted to do, though, was simply to point out that while some trade unionists think first—and perhaps only—of the unions, others, like the Catholics and the Communists, have larger aims that sometimes conflict with those of the unattached rank-and-file. I am not saying that one group is right and the other wrong, or that Catholics should think of their union before their Church. I believe that the ends of unions do not go far enough to satisfy most of us politically or spiritually or any other way. But I do think that all of us should think deeply about the conflict between immediate and future perspectives, which has so often been responsible for the confusion in the labor movement. There is frequently such a conflict, and I know of cases where it has affected events.

New York, N. Y.

RICHARD H. ROVERE

LITERATURE AND ARTS

SUGGESTION FOR BOOK-LIST SOLONS

HAROLD C. GARDINER

THEY are brave people, these compilers of lists of great books. They bare their breasts to all the bombs and sniping of the opposite literary and historical camp; their list is a red flag to all who do not agree with them. If controversy and disagreement is the lot of larger and more inclusive lists, how much more will the slings and arrows bombard a selection of the ten books "which have had the greatest and most lasting effect upon human thought and civilization"!

This is the task a committee of educators set for itself in attempting to select such a list for the Winter Course to be conducted at Town Hall in New York. With the completion and publication of the list, the fat was in the fire. Letters began to pour in, differing vigorously with the proposed selections. So, in true Town Hall fashion, the list of the ten greatest was opened to discussion, and suggestions asked.

The matter is important enough, I think, to warrant a printed discussion, for the simple purpose of giving some permanent form to truths that ought to be weighed by those who compile such lists. The lecture-series will be given wide-spread publicity; thousands of people, I suppose, will attend it, among them many teachers, for the course is accredited by the New York City Board of Education. The big names of the selectors, who will also publicly discuss the books, will dazzle many into an uncritical approval, and so the misconceptions will spread in widening circles. The great culture-thirsty public will imagine that when such Solons speak, the last word has been said.

As a matter of fact, hardly the first word has been said. There are so many preludes, provisos, definitions of terms, restrictions that have to be gone into before compiling such a list, that the Town Hall committee has done little more than open the matter for debate. Certainly, they have by no means selected a definitive or even representative list.

Their ten greatest are: the *Old Testament*, the *Republic* of Plato, the *New Testament*, the *Meditations* of Marcus Aurelius, the *Divine Comedy* of Dante, the *Ethic* of Spinoza, Rousseau's *Emile*, Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations* and Marx's *Capital* (considered together), Darwin's *Origin of Species* and Freud's *Interpretation of Dreams*. The

selectors were William Lyon Phelps, Edward Howard Griggs and Lewis Browne.

The point that first comes to mind is inevitably to ask what sort of influence a book should have had, to be included among the world's greatest ten. Shall we demand an influence that strengthened and purified the stream of civilization, that elevated man in his aspirations and ideals? Then, definitely, we shall have to rule out Marx's *Capital* and Freud's *Interpretation of Dreams*. Influence they have had, without doubt, but mainly to shake and shatter the fabric of our culture, opening the sluice-gates to a flood of false social philosophies and vitiated psychologies.

Perhaps, though, we ought not to be bothered, in this selection, by any moral consequences of great books. Let us, seems to be the assumption of the critics, simply pick the ten books that have made the greatest stir, whether for good or ill.

So be it. But even being so, the issue is not yet clear enough for an intelligent selection. What culture and civilization are we talking about? Western only? If we are to select the books that have had the "most lasting effect upon human thought and civilization" (without limitation), we cannot restrict ourselves to Western writers. There must be room for such works as the *Koran*, which profoundly influences today, as it has since the tenth century, the thought and intimate daily lives of the millions in the Moslem world. We cannot ignore such works as the little we have of Confucius, or the collections of Chinese laws, which have molded the lives of the East's teeming millions.

But let us grant that even this observation is ruled out as irrelevant. Let us restrict the list exclusively to Western culture. Even so, there are further thoughts that arise on a reading of the Town Hall list.

A glance at this list reveals the astonishing fact that a period of some 1,500 years—from the *Meditations* of Marcus Aurelius (c. 180) to the *Ethic* of Spinoza (1677)—is represented by only one book, Dante's *Divine Comedy*.

Now, what were these fifteen centuries? Were they a stagnant, weed-choked Sargasso sea, with the blue and living waters before and after, they themselves sterile and immobile? What happened in those fifteen centuries? Some few events, such

as the fall of the Roman Empire, the Christianization of the barbarians, the rise and consolidation of the Christian culture that sprinkled Europe with universities, the Crusades, the rearing of the magnificent temple of Christian philosophy and theology, the Protestant Revolt—some few events like these happened in those years, and can we find no books that hid the seed-thoughts or watered the deep roots of these and kindred world-shaking events?

Now, it may be next to impossible to trace any of these tremendous steps in the history of the race to any one book, but there are books whose influence was undoubted. How can we begin to discuss our Western mode of life, with its greatly uniform customs of law, without thinking at once of the Roman law and that law's great digest, the *Corpus Iuris Civilis* of Justinian (c. 529)? Again, for over a thousand years, the devotional, ecclesiastical and, to a great extent, the social life of the entire Western world was molded and vitalized by the prescriptions of Canon Law. True, this existed in no one book prior to its promulgation in 1918, but such great keystones in the history of Canon Law as Pope Gregory's *Decretals* impinged at countless and vital points on the life of every prince and peasant in Christendom.

Turning now to the field of philosophy and theology, it must be granted, that, whether the pundits of modern philosophy see much in it or not, Scholastic Philosophy, the *philosophia perennis*, was dominant, even exclusive, in Western Europe for four centuries. (Will it be a surprise for our listeners to hear that it is still alive?) None of the modern philosophies can match this achievement. And is there any book that gave the impulse to, or crystallized this great movement? We would feel, *a priori*, that there must be, and there is. It is a towering monument of the clearest genius, that perfect synthesis of the highest and noblest thought of the Ancient World with Christian revelation, the *Summa Theologiae* of Saint Thomas Aquinas. It is, of course, possible to dispute over the book that best represents this great triumph of the human mind. Some may care to consider Peter Lombard's *Sentences* as more fundamentally the source of the Schoolmen's achievement, but the point is that some book in this field *must* be chosen, for the achievement itself is unique in the history of the race.

Again, within this 1,500-year period, another book towers out as inescapable. It was read and pondered on and preached about by millions of souls in Christendom. It is still read and pondered on and preached about. It has been translated into every known language and gone through unknown numbers of editions. It is *The Following of Christ*. The change, the revolution, the influence it has brought to civilization has not been one of thunder and lightning, of cataclysm, but the no less marvelous change of interior growth, of devotion, of holiness. Do not these things, too, influence human thought and civilization?

That, then, is the main thought I would like to leave with the drawers-up of such lists. To trace

the history of Western culture and high-light the peaks must be, in the very nature of things, a mapping out of Christian culture, for ours is a Christian civilization. It may be now largely a civilization that does not know Christ, it may never advert to its Christianity, it may be drifting away from what little realization it has of the Rock whence it was hewn, but it *was* hewn from that Rock, its roots *were* part of the Vine, and any vitality it still has wells from that source.

Hence, the great books of Christian times are "must" books on any list of great books, whoever be the men who compile that list. This is not a partisan paper, pleading for place for Catholics on a list of books. It is simply a reminder that history has already picked the great books for us, if we can read history plainly.

That, then, seems to me the great defect in the Town Hall's list. Other remarks, however, seem in order. It is doubtful if Plato's *Republic* was nearly as influential as Aristotle's *Ethics*. Certainly, Aristotle's political thought has colored more of our Western life, down to the days of the framers of our own Constitution. And if Plato must be chosen, it is at least debatable whether his *Phaedo*, with its sublime thoughts on the immortality of the soul, should not have preference over the *Republic*.

Further, the Protestant Revolt was a world-shattering thing. We may weep or jubilate that it came to sow the seeds of disunion that have burgeoned into our bitter harvests of today, but there it stands, big and portentous, in the path of history. Is there no book that, more than any other, fanned that flame? Whether we chose Luther's works, taken as a whole, or the *Christian Institutes* of Calvin, or, it may be, Fox's *Book of Martyrs*, some book in that field must, in all justice, be selected.

And since that Revolt, when the traditional Christian philosophy became outmoded, modern philosophy owes its breath and being to one Emmanuel Kant. His *Critique of Pure Reason*, it seems to me, deserves place over anything by Spinoza.

Two final remarks. Rousseau's *Contrat Social*, with its influence on the French Revolution, should replace his *Emile*, and to say that Freud's *Interpretation of Dreams* "has had a lasting effect" is rather a rash prophecy than a sober statement of fact. If the list must contain a contemporary, Bergson is far more representative.

Far be it from this writer to suggest his ten great books. It is not, however, a task of insuperable difficulty, for the simple reason that you do not need to have read a book to know that it was tremendously influential. All you need for that is to have read history. The suspicion intrudes itself, on seeing some of these lists of "greats," that the compilers may know a lot about individual books, but that they are not quite so sure about the great Christian tradition against whose background the books must be viewed. Either that, or many of them read history with a mind that has, perhaps without realizing it, become itself a partner in the conspiracy against the truth.

BOOKS

ANOTHER THRILLING ACT IN THE UNIQUE DRAMA

A HISTORY OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH, VOLUME IV.
By Rev. Fernand Mourret, S.S. Translated by Rev.
Newton Thompson, S.T.D. B. Herder Book Co. \$4

OFTEN, the appearance of a French work in English dress is a fair test of its merits. We have here a book that was worth translating, and the translation is, on the whole, very well done. About the only difference one notes between the original text of Mourret and the English version is the omission of marginal notes in the latter, which is a loss, and consecutive numbering of abundant footnotes, which is an improvement. Even a few of the incidental inaccuracies of the author have been carried over. But, more important, the easy flow of Mourret's French has been preserved without slavishly adhering to foreign idiom.

Fernand Mourret began publication of his *Histoire générale de l'Eglise* some thirty years ago. In 1925, the ninth volume brought the work down to the death of Leo XIII. The author made no pretense of profound original research. What he offered was a magnificent sweeping survey based, for the most part, on the best secondary literature in French and the major documentary collections. A German might object that the narrative was weighted too much in favor of Gallic achievement, while the Spanish translator insisted upon supplementing many a chapter from Spanish records. At times we have felt that the Church herself is lost in the portraying of too many churchmen, good, bad and indifferent. The ideal Church history is yet to be written, perhaps may never be written. But from this entertaining mass of factual detail, enlivened by a minimum of philosophizing, the reader will be duly impressed by the greatness of a unique, Divine Institution. Sixteen hundred years of the long, continuous story are now available to the English reader in five volumes.

Seminary and college librarians will have a standing order for the volumes, which are coming out at intervals of approximately two years. To the intelligent Catholic we would suggest that he put the whole work, and this volume in particular, high on his list of cultural readings. There is a dramatic interest in the rise of the Church from the degradation of the tenth century to the glories of the thirteenth, from the violence of the "iron age" and the sad corruption of the *era meretricum* to the flowering of the Catholic spirit in the cathedrals, the universities, the *Summa* and the *Divina Comedia*. Human weakness and perversity gave way before the heroic efforts of great Saints. The beneficent action of the Church is nowhere more in evidence than in the transforming of the "Dark Ages" into the high medieval period. The French title of this volume is well chosen. Mourret calls it *la Chrétiente*. R. CORRIGAN

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After eight more years of browsing among "vols of books," the youngster had acquired an intellectual indigestion from which he never completely recovered. Before he went up to Harvard, he had revolted against the narrow ecclesiasticism of his environment, which was to be expected. Unfortunately, he confounded these early religious teachings with Christianity, and by the time he took his degree, Darwin and Huxley were his gods. Fiske was never quite so heterodox as he thought he was, and compared with some philosophers who have followed him, he now seems almost orthodox; a conclusion which he would have repelled with scorn. His heretical opinions, however, seem to have kept him from his ambition, a chair at Harvard, and in spite of his early approval of Eliot and his theories of education, the best his Alma Mater could offer him was the post of assistant librarian, and temporary assignments as special lecturer.

Fiske's greatest success was as a platform lecturer rather than as a professional teacher of philosophy or history, and in the 'eighties and 'nineties no lecture-course throughout the country was of first rank unless it included an appearance by John Fiske. Yet before he was thirty, his writings had made his name known in England as well as in America, and in 1882 he eagerly availed himself of an opportunity to visit England. He was well received, and his comments on Darwin, Huxley, George Henry Lewes, George Eliot, Herbert Spencer, Max Müller, Freude and other lions who welcomed him into their dens, are interesting, and often amusing. He liked them all, except Müller and Freude. "Darwin is the dearest, sweetest, loveliest old Grandpa that ever was," wrote the young enthusiast. Huxley "is as handsome as a young Apollo," but "beyond doubt Spencer is the profoundest thinker of all these men." Müller he thought "a shallow and loose-thinking sort of person," and Freude, "a bitter, hollow-hearted man," one "who does not believe in anything, not even himself."

It is no longer possible to take Fiske's estimate of himself, quite generally shared by the public of his day. His philosophical works are long out of print, and out of demand, and his contributions to American history are not of first importance. He survives in the memory of older men who remember him as a forceful, stimulating and entertaining lecturer, but the new generation knows him not. The chief interest of the present volume is the picture it presents of a rather bumptious youth who became a figure of note in an academic world that has now passed away.

PAUL L. BLAKELY, S.J.

A TREAT OF A BOOK

YOU'D BETTER GET QUICKLY

SURVIVAL TILL SEVENTEEN. By Leonard Feeney, S.J. Sheed and Ward. \$1.50

IN an amusing passage in this delightful book, Father Feeney puzzles a little over the derivation of his first name. Does it mean "wild lion" or "sweet lion"? While I was chuckling over his doubts, the lion that sprang into my imagination was the famous cowardly lion of *The Wizard of Oz*. Now, whatever be the lioninity of Father Feeney, it is certainly not that kind, for this is not a cowardly or timid book. It is a bold book, because it is a humble book. It takes a lot of humility to talk sincerely and openly and humorously about yourself and your family, and that is what our lion does.

Reminiscences of early and later childhood in his native town of Lynn are engagingly told—droll and thoughtful little tales of the Chinese laundryman, of the little girl who captivated him with her piano lessons, of Mr. Wigglesworth, the grocer, and above all, of his mother and father and the family gatherings, for the Feeneys were great entertainers and stimulated in turn the "talents" of their guests, even that hidden one of Mary's Joe, the shy young plumber—though it was

really an act of God, and not the Feeneys, that turned that trick.

I wish, though, that Father Feeney had saved the chapters on Art and Poetry for another book. They really do not fit into his description of this one as "some portraits of early ideas." For these are mature ideas, Chestertonian in their agility and in the play and interplay of comparison and antithesis. In fact, the lights shift and dance so intricately in these chapters that it is hard not to be a little dazzled. Weak eyes get that way in brilliant sunshine.

Another kind of lion that Father Feeney is not, is the M.G.M. lion that roars at us on the screen under the title *Ars Gratia Artis*. He never roars, and certainly not under such a silly motto. His *ars* is *veritatis* (or *Dei*) *gratia*—art for truth's (or, the same thing, God's) sake. And as the truth is great and will prevail, so Father Feeney's heart-warming work will survive much beyond seventeen, and he himself, we pray, much beyond seventy, for our continuing delight.

HAROLD C. GARDINER

THE WOUNDED DON'T CRY. By *Quentin Reynolds*. E. P. Dutton and Co. \$2.50

IT is as *Collier's* London correspondent, and in his Berkeley Square apartment that Quentin Reynolds writes this fast-moving account of his brave neighbors who have been through "the greatest mass torture any people have ever been asked to endure"; but they don't cry, even the wounded don't cry.

If you enjoyed the sentiment expressed in Alice Duer Miller's *The White Cliffs* and the journalistic eloquence of Walter Durante's *I Write As I Please*, then you will sympathize with Mr. Reynolds' pro-British attitude and find interest in his picturesque gossip, trivial incidents, and amusing anecdotes which aptly characterize the British sense of humor and display a profound admiration for the English people.

Mr. Reynolds reported the invasion and fall of France before going to England. Indicatory of his breezy informal style and the chaotic state of France are his words: "So I walked into the Ritz Bar on May 10th and I've been running in circles ever since. First I ran toward the front; then away from it and since then I've been running away from bombs and that's mighty wearing on the feet."

Although *The Wounded Don't Cry* is on some counts informative and on others entertaining, there is little in it that cannot be found in the daily newspapers.

P. ELLIOTTSMITH

A GLANCE AT THE EDITOR'S BOOK CASE

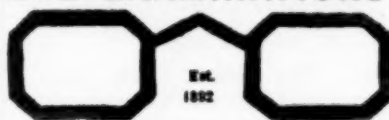
FOR spiritual reading at the Holy Hour there is Father John G. Hogan's *Sentinels of the King* (Bruce Humphries, \$1.75). There are twenty-nine chapters of meditations and reflections, hagiographical in content, yet developing the leading thoughts of the four seasons of the liturgical year.

Wonder-World of the Soul, by a Sister of Notre Dame de Namur (Kenedy, \$1.50) is a spiritual anthology gathered from the writings of the Saints and the great ascetical writers. The choice is well made, and the quotations will appeal particularly to those who have little time to give to spiritual reading.

For pious souls who are little acquainted with theological terms, nothing could be more welcome than the Rev. Dr. Mack's *Splendor and Strength of the Inner Life* (Pustet, \$2). These are five discourses, which, though not deliberately linked together, treat of the Sacrifice of the Cross and the Sacrifice of the Mass.

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a matter of form, for the discourses are readily understandable, familiar in style, with plain illustrations.

Frank J. Sheed rather blows his own publishing trumpet in *Sidelights of the Catholic Revival* (Sheed and Ward, \$1.25). For this is a selection from that publishing house's advertising organ, and very stimulating selections they are. You get an acquaintance with many of the books as well as the authors of present day Catholic letters.

Carl Zuchmayer in *Second Wind* (Doubleday, Doran, \$2.50) reviews his career, first as an Austrian and, later, as one of the well known Berlin playwrights. He managed to dodge the Nazis and, not to put too fine a point on it, managed to dodge his Church's teachings on divorce. Dorothy Thompson introduces him very laudably!

Roger Fry, by Virginia Woolf (Harcourt, Brace, \$3.50) is concerned mostly in explaining Fry's influence on English art. Art students will enjoy the book, for there is a good deal in it which will bemuse the layman in art. And, at the risk of seeming snooty, Virginia Woolf has somewhat let herself go in the direction of hero worship.

Somewhat academic is *Lucius Cary: Second Viscount Falkland*, by Kurt Weber (Columbia University Press, \$3), which concerns itself with a seventeenth century English poet and man of letters. The atmosphere and the time are those of the age of Milton. Literature and religion enter upon the scene, with much about the Cary family, which teetered between Catholicism and Calvinism.

Redemption, by Gabriel Francis Powers (Good Shepherd Press) is the brief title of a very fine life of St. Mary of St. Euphrasia Pelletier, who was canonized last year by Pope Pius XII. This remarkable woman, who founded the Order of the Good Shepherd Sisters, lived through a true martyrdom, opposed at every point; ultimately to become the Foundress of an Order whose good works extend throughout the world.

It took Lancelot Hogben twenty thousand miles to get from Norway to England, after the Nazis had invaded that country. What happened on that most extraordinary *anabasis* is told in *Author in Transit* (W. W. Norton Co., \$2.50). Siberia and Japan, as well as the United States, were the route of his return to his native England, and, believe it or not, the Russian Utopia was anything but utopian to this Englishman.

Dr. Leo L. Stanley, in collaboration with Evelyn Wells, has produced *Men At Their Worst* (Appleton-Century, \$3), which collects the stories of some forty thousand human misfits, who drifted into the California State Prison at San Quentin in the course of a quarter of a century. The dramatic, the bizarre, and the morbid are somewhat stressed; but what else can be expected from some twenty-seven years spent among criminals!

Poems, short stories, essays and other writings are collected by William Lyon Phelps in *The Mothers' Anthology* (Doubleday, Doran, \$3). The collection is well done, even if it does lean somewhat to the sentimental side. A few more citations from Catholic sources would not have been amiss. But the general reading public will like the selections.

Holland Thompson, who is editor-in-chief of *The Book of Knowledge Annual, 1941* (The Grolier Society) has brought the volume thoroughly up-to-date. Its topics range from the Aaland Islands to the Yukon Territory, and everything in between that could possibly have happened. The photography and art work are excellent, and both the young and the not-so-young will find herein much to learn about world events in the past year.

Medora, by Zdena Trinka (International Book Publishing Co., \$2.50) is a mixture of fact and fiction. It is the story of the birth and death of a little desert town in the mountains of North Dakota. The Marquis de Mores, a French nobleman, founded the town, which ultimately became one of the ghost towns of the West. The plot is jejune, which doesn't matter much, because adventure and narrative are the really significant parts of the tale.

THE GLANCER

ART

AS this column is devoted to reporting on the arts, it may seem irrelevant to refer in it to the current world revolution. It is a fact, however, that art of a significant kind is always closely related to the unperceived currents of existence and the appearance of a revolutionary type of art, such as prevailed in recent decades, has but preceded the actual revolution in which we are now involved. The idea of the prophetic quality in art was renewed on seeing the exhibition *Landmarks of Modern Art* at the Pierre Matisse Galleries.

All the artists included are prominent figures in the European, revolutionary art movements which broke out like a symptomatic rash during the past fifty years. These movements are not only symptoms of the convulsing disorder in intellectual, social and economic life, but they also evidence some of the characteristics of the synthetic societies which Soviet and Nazi-Fascist powers are seeking to establish. Qualities of, and predilections for atavism, a dehumanized content, machine idolatry and a rejection of natural as well as traditional norms are common to them both. As the idealistic revolutionary is usually an early victim of the active phase of a revolution, it is to be noted that this art is now banned in Germany and discredited in the Soviet.

Regardless of the parallel to the revolution, this is a particularly good exhibition. Similar, as well as dissimilar work is shown, which creates revealing contrasts. The artistic level is uniformly high and while the work is not the best of all of the artists its quality is distinctly impressive. Included are abstractions by Picasso, Braque, Léger and Gris as well as the abstract sculpture, *Bird in Flight*, by Brancusi. This piece is in marble, a material technically unsuited to it. Duplicates of it in other collections are in polished brass, a material suited to the sculptural design and better related to the intrinsic beauty of its forms. Sensitiveness combined with unassertive strength is usual in Picasso's work and his canvas has these qualities as well as his unique feeling for surface pattern.

Surrealism is represented by Chirico, Mirò and Tanguy, the last being the most completely typical of the subtly unclean quality of this "dream" art. The large canvas by Matisse is a well designed, statically resolved composition showing an interior with a reclining figure. While it is distinct from the abstractions because of its clarity in representation, it is one with them in its detachment from the human quality of the picture's subject matter. A rather startling contrast is afforded by the Derain picture, as this eclectic modernist has chosen to paint with an old fashioned type of fidelity, reminiscent of past and more academic eras.

Most of this work is typical of the series of modern, European art movements which now seem to be finishing. Their doom would appear to be inevitable for, like most revolutionary efforts, they embody their own lethal ingredient. They have, however, been experimental to the degree where fresh values and new directions become a possibility. The philosophic background, it may be noted, has been non-religious, Freudian and mechanistic and the motivation as regards artistic character has been predominantly cerebral, a fatal thing in the arts.

The art of Roualt, whose *Wounded Clown* dominates the galleries, is another matter, as its quality derives from interior spiritual sources. In this painting we see that type of vital, religious feeling that informs subject matter not in itself specifically religious. This religious, and natural, basis of Roualt's art has an affinity for the perpetually sustaining elements in human life and this, combined as it is with a unique power in painting design, gives Roualt promise of place in the small hierarchy of source personalities in art.

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THEATRE

WHEN you feel like shouting a song about the downfall of the American theatre, "let none look at me." I will not join in. The American theatre will be alive and vigorous long after we and our descendants have gone to any reward or punishment we may have earned. But if you start shouting about the frequent arid stretches in New York theatrical entertainment this season, you may count on me for a sympathetic moan.

THE CREAM IN THE WELL. I will not moan over the cheerful plays that have failed, or the various mystery plays that softly came and briskly went. The playwrights quite properly were trying to cheer us and divert our minds. We can appreciate their kindly efforts in our behalf. But when a playwright as able as Lynn Riggs offers us a morbid and horrible drama from whose theme every decent mind shrinks, I am justified in joining my dramatic colleagues in their groans.

Mr. Riggs, who usually writes gloomily but often very effectively, gives himself wholly to morbidity in his latest offering. His hero and heroine are brother and sister, in love with each other and—to mention the play's one redeeming point—fiercely fighting against that unnatural love. The brother goes to China. The sister's thwarted nature finds a certain release in general devilishness. She drives to suicide the girl her brother could have married. She sends her brother to the sea-life he loathes. She then marries, and with brilliant success devotes herself to the process of making her husband's life a burden.

Brother returns and allows her to kill herself. Her passing is a great relief to all the characters, and even more than a relief to the audience. Did I say that the play is produced by Carly Wharton and Martin Gabel at the Booth Theatre and that Mary Morris, Martha Sleeper and Lief Erickson are the leading players? It is, and they are. But they couldn't help it much. There was only one redeeming feature. All the players whistled their parts, so few in the audience heard the lines.

MR. AND MRS. NORTH. It is a comfort to turn to Mr. and Mrs. North. This is a cheerful little mystery play in book form by Mr. and Mrs. Richard Lockridge and by Owen Davis as dramatist. Both its deaths occur off-stage and a peculiarly engaging company is on the stage. The Norths, already familiar to readers of the *New Yorker*, are given life by Peggy Conklin and Albert Hackett. A most engaging young couple they are, too—ideal for the roles they act.

The Norths start the melodrama going by finding a murdered man in their living room closet. It is the place where they keep "the makings" of their cocktails, so of course they made the discovery immediately upon their return from a visit to the country. In the progress of the play a second man is murdered, but he kindly goes out into the rear hall for the experience and all we hear is a muffled fall.

Mrs. North, only slightly aided by Mr. North, is equal to the discovery of the murderer, and all ends well. Incidentally, the melodrama is so bright and gay throughout, and all the members of the company are so delightful, that the murders really do not seem to matter. They merely give Mrs. North a chance to get all mixed up herself, and get everybody else mixed up. Then, she solves them. As Peggy Conklin plays her she is wholly fascinating. She has my permission to solve the very next murder mystery that occurs in my circle.

Young Hackett is almost as good as she is, and Owen Davis, Jr., whose father dramatized the story, acts his role with effective dignity. But all the acting is good. It usually is, on the New York stage. Possibly I've mentioned that before.

ELIZABETH JORDAN

FILMS

VIRGINIA. Hollywood keeps alive the Civil War spirit on devious fronts, and this romantic clash between Northern commercialism and Southern chivalry ends with the customary decision in favor of the side which always loses in real life. Edward H. Griffith has presented the conflict with persuasive emphasis on the leisurely grace and picturesqueness of Virginia, and technicolor makes some unanswerable points in its favor. The story itself is rather patchwork and depends heavily on the overworked striking coincidence. A Southern girl returns home after many years but only to realize money on the estate. Her attitude changes under the influence of a strong traditionalist and his baby daughter, but when she learns that his wife is still alive, she turns to a Yankee for consolation. Their second-best marriage is prevented, however, by the convenient death of the Southerner's dissolute wife which brings reunion all around. There is a restrained note of sentiment throughout which makes this very *entertaining adult fare*. Madeleine Carroll, Fred MacMurray, Stirling Hayden and tiny Carolyn Lee are uniformly excellent. (Paramount)

HIGH SIERRA. As an occasional melodrama, this is high tension excitement, but it will be judged harshly in retrospect if it begins any such cycle of gangster glorifications as pockmarked the screen's adolescence. As it stands, the film has too many of the characteristics of that period but there is a saving suggestion of better nature here and there and a conclusion which is both theatrically effective and true to fact. A notorious gangster, released from jail by pressure from higher up, rejoins his colleagues in the Sierras. A meeting with an elderly couple and their daughter spools him somewhat for the job which awaits him. In the wake of a robbery, the gangster finds his protection at an inn and is shot in a mountain pass. Humphrey Bogart invests the gangster with a certain reluctance which is the nearest he comes to reform and, with Ida Lupino as a tawdry entertainer, dominates an effective cast numbering Henry Travers, Joan Brooks, Elizabeth Risdon and Henry Hull. This is hard-bitten drama for *mature audiences*. (Warner)

COME LIVE WITH ME. The title of this film, which aspires to sophisticated comedy and ends as farce, goes back to Christopher Marlowe, and the plot itself perhaps a bit farther. A new use for marriage is discovered by a refugee who rents a husband to avoid deportation. Her husband complicates matters, however, by winning her over to true love against the wiles of a married publisher who, adding insult to romantic injury, provides the hero with necessary funds by accepting his true life novel. Clarence Brown's direction, after being smartly brittle for half the film, reverts to sentimental clichés about the simple virtues. But even that late change relieves the intolerable impression of surface cynicism and makes the total effect less annoying. James Stewart and Hedy Lamarr are featured but yield to an excellent bit by Donald Meek as a professional tramp. This is too infrequently amusing to compensate adults for its *light morals*. (MGM)

YOU'RE THE ONE. An involved story of agents' intrigue clutters this minor musical entertainment, as an ambitious singer goes through many complications and several hair-dos to win a job with a certain bandleader, and then decides to sing for another. Edward Horton, Lillian Cornell, Albert Dekker, Jerry Colonna, Bonnie Baker and Orrin Tucker's band add up to a mildly amusing semi-vaudeville piece for the family. (Paramount)

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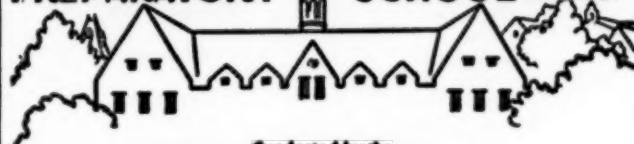
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EVENTS

DR. Ales Hrdlicka, Curator of Physical Anthropology of the Smithsonian Institution, has just released to the public the arresting discoveries gleaned by measuring 150 members of the National Academy of Sciences. . . . The most distinguished American scientists constitute the membership of the Academy. . . . The measurements disclosed that the Academy skull is bigger and broader than the average non-Academy skull. . . . Evidence indicated that skulls of great scholars are thinner than skulls of non-great scholars. . . . The members measured have lower cheek-bones and darker hair. More than half the scientists inspected have subdued cheek-bones, whereas only thirty-six per cent of the general public can boast of subdued cheek-bones. Many of the Academy members are now gray or bald, but all at one time had hair. The proportion of Academy members who have or had dark hair runs more than one-half, whereas only one-fourth of the run-of-the-mill American native stock have or had dark hair. . . . The absence of red hair is conspicuous. Not one of the scientists investigated has or had red hair, and relatively few are or were blondes. . . . There are low brows in the Academy. In fact the ratio of low to high brows runs the same inside the Academy as it does outside. . . . Startling also is the discovery that the proportion of receding foreheads is much higher among the Academy members than it is among the Toms, Dicks and Harrys.

The study, it appears, was not as thorough as it might have been. . . . Why was it confined to skulls, foreheads, hair? . . . Such a procedure leaves the general public in the dark on a number of important questions. . . . For example, what are the Academy ears like? . . . Are there ears in the Academy that stick out like automobile fenders, and if so, what is the proportion of such ears as compared with the ratio of similarly shaped *hol polloi* ears? . . . How do the Academy noses run? What sort predominates—Grecian, Roman, pug? . . . What about the Academy waist lines? Are they big like the heads, or receding like a number of the foreheads? . . . Is the proportion of ham-like hands high? . . . How stand the feet? Are the Academy shoes as huge as the Academy hats? . . . What about the blood pressure? Is it low like some of the brows, or high like some of the other brows?

It is a pity that the study was not more comprehensive. . . . In its present incomplete form, it furnishes but meager assistance to vocational and curriculum directors. . . . Had it been more thorough, directors could have known at once which students might expect success in the scientific field and which students might not. . . . Universities could have issued sheets of instructions, perhaps somewhat as follows: "These regulations will govern directors in deciding which students are eligible for scientific courses. An aptitude for scientific proficiency is to be presumed in those applicants who possess big heads, thin skulls, dark hair, protruding ears, bulging waistlines, Roman noses, ham-like hands. Applicants should wear, at the minimum size twelve shoes. Red hair, or pug noses, or a combination of both, may not be admitted into any scientific course, except by special permission of the University trustees. Low brows may enter, and subdued cheek-bones should be accorded every advantage. Bald-heads must furnish satisfactory proof that their former hair was dark. Blond hair may be admitted sparingly, but should, as a general thing, be advised to enrol in other courses." . . . Alas, the survey did not disclose full information. Directors will have to work along old-fashioned lines, and continue to be governed by what they find inside the student's head.

THE PARADER